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THE MAHABHARATA

OF

KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

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BY

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Neither the deities, nor Gandharvas, nor human beings, O Bhagiratha, succeed in coming here without having practised the severest austerities. How, indeed, hast thou attained to this region?—⁷

“Bhagiratha said,—I used to make gifts of hundred thousands of gold coins unto the Brāhmanas, observing the Brahmacharyya vow all the while. It is not through the merit of those gifts, O learned one, that I have attained to this region.⁸ I performed the Ekarātri sacrifice for ten times, and the Pancharātri sacrifice for as many times. The Ekādaçarātri sacrifice was performed by me eleven times. The great sacrifice of Jyotishtoma was performed by me a hundred times. It is not, however, through the merits of those sacrifices that I have attained to this region of felicity.⁹ For a hundred years I lived continuously by the side of the holy Jāhnavi, all the while practising the severest austerities. There I made gifts unto the Brāhmanas of thousands of males and innumerable female slaves.¹⁰ By the side of the Pushkara lakes I made gifts unto the Brāhmanas, for a hundred thousand times, a hundred thousand steeds, and two hundred thousand kine.¹¹ I also gave away a thousand damsels of great beauty, each adorned with golden moons, and sixty thousand more, decked with ornaments of pure gold. It is not, however, through the merits of those acts that I have succeeded in attaining to these regions.^{†12} O lord of the universe, performing those sacrifices known by the name of Gosava, I gave away ten Arvudas of

* The ‘Ekarātri,’ ‘Pancharātri,’ and ‘Ekādaçarātri’ sacrifices consist of fasts and gifts for the periods indicated by the names, *viz.*, one night, five nights, and eleven nights.—T.

† ‘Golden moons’ imply those well-carved and beautifully fringed discs of gold that are worn by Hindu ladies on the forehead and that hang by thin chains of gold attached to the hair. In Bengal, ladies of respectable houses wear a kind of ornament called ‘Chandrahāra’ or the moon-wreath. This ornament is worn round the waist, on the hip. Several chains of gold, from half a dozen to a dozen, having a large disc of well-carved gold to which they are attached, constitute this really very beautiful ornament. The disc is divided into two halves, attached to each other by hinges, so that in sitting down, the ornament produces no inconvenience.—T.

kine, presenting each Brāhmana with ten kine, each of whom was accompanied with her calf, each of whom yielded milk at the time, and with each of whom were given a vessel of gold and one of white brass for milking her.¹³ Performing many Soma sacrifices, I gave away unto each Brāhmana ten kine each of whom yielded milk, and each of whom had brought forth only her first calf, besides making presents unto them of hundreds of kine belonging to that species which is known by the name of Rohini.¹⁴ I also gave away unto the Brāhmanas twice ten Prayutas of other kine, all yielding milk. It is not through the merit of those gifts, O Brahman, that I have succeeded in attaining to this region of felicity.¹⁵ I also gave away a hundred thousand horses of the Vālhika breed, all white of complexion, and adorned with garlands of gold. It is not, however, through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region.¹⁶ I gave away eight crores of golden coins unto the Brāhmanas, O Brahman, and then another ten crores also, in each sacrifice that I performed. It is not, however, through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region of felicity.¹⁷ I also gave away ten and then seven crores of steeds, O Grandsire, each of green complexion, each having ears that were dark, and each adorned with garlands of gold.¹⁸ I also gave away ten and seven thousand elephants of huge size, of teeth as large as plough-shares, each having those whirls on its body which are called Padmas, and each adorned with garlands of gold.¹⁹ I gave away ten thousand cars, O Grandsire, whose limbs were made of gold, and which were adorned with diverse ornaments of gold.²⁰ I also gave away seven thousand other cars with steeds yoked unto each. All the steeds that were yoked unto them were adorned with ornaments of gold. Those cars represented the Dakshinas of a sacrifice and were of exactly that kind which is indicated in the Vedas.²¹ In the ten great Vājapeya sacrifices that I performed, I gave away a thousand heroes each endowed with the puissance of Indra himself, judged by their prowess and the sacrifices they had performed.²² Spending a vast sum of money, O Grandsire, and performing eight Rājasuya sacrifices, I gave away (unto the Brāhmanas that officiated in them)²³ a

thousand kings whose necks were adorned with garlands of gold, after having vanquished them in battle. It is not, however, through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region.²⁴ In those sacrifices, O Lord of the universe, the presents that flowed from me were as copious as the stream of Gangā herself. Unto each Brāhmana I gave two thousand elephants decked with gold, as many steeds adorned with golden ornaments, and a hundred villages of the best kind.²⁵ Verily, I gave these unto each Brāhmana for three times in succession. observant of penances, subsisting on regulated diet, adopting tranquillity of soul, and restraining speech,²⁶ I dwelt for a long time on the breast of Himavat by the side of that Gangā whose irresistible current (as it fell from Heaven) was borne by Mahādeva on his head. It is not through the merit of these acts, O Grandsire, that I have attained to this region.²⁷ Throwing the Cami, I adored the gods in myriads of such sacrifices as are completed in course of a single day, and such others as take twelve days for completing, and others still as can be completed in three and ten days, besides many Pundarikas. I have not attained to this region through the merits of any of those sacrifices.*²⁸ I gave unto the Brāhmanas eight thousands of white-complexioned bulls, each graced with a beautiful hump, and each having one of its horns covered with gold. Unto them I also gave beautiful wives whose necks were adorned with chains of gold.²⁹ I also gave away large heaps of gold and wealth of other kinds. Verily, I gave away hills of gems and precious stones. Villages, numbering by thousands and teeming with wealth and corn, were also given away by me.³⁰ With all my senses about me, I gave away unto the Brāhmanas a hundred thousand kine each of whom had brought forth only her first calf, at many great sacrifices which I performed. It is not, however, through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region.³¹ I adored

* In the Cānti Parvan it has been explained that in ancient times kings sometimes performed sacrifices causing altars to be raised at small distances from one another. These distances were measured by hurling a heavy piece of wood called Cami, so that throwing the Cami from one altar, the next altar would be created upon the spot where it fell.—T.

the deities in a sacrifice that is completed in eleven days. Twice I adored them in sacrifices that are completed in twelve days. I adored them also many a time in the Horse-sacrifices. Six and ten times I performed the Arkāyana sacrifice. It is not through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region.³² I also gave unto each Brāhmana a forest of Kāñchana trees extending for a Yojana on every side, and with each tree adorned with jewels and gems. It is not through the merits of that act that I have attained to this region.³³ For thirty years, with heart perfectly freed from wrath, I observed the Turāyana vow that is possessed of very superior merit, and gave away unto the Brāhmanas every day nine hundred kine.³⁴ Indeed, O Lord of the universe, every one of those kine belonged to the Rohini species and yielded milk at the time I gave them away. It is not through the merits of those acts, O chief of the deities, that I have attained to this region.³⁵ I worshipped thirty fires, O Brahman, every day. I adored the deities in eight sacrifices in which the fat of all animals was poured on the fire. I adored them in seven sacrifices in which the fat of human beings was poured on the fire.³⁶ I adored them in a thousand and twenty-eight Viçwajit sacrifices. It is not through the merits of those sacrifices, O lord of all the deities, that I have attained to this region.³⁷ On the banks of Sarayu and Vāhudā and Gangā, as also in the woods of Naimisha, I gave away millions of kine unto the Brāhmanas. It is not through the merits of those acts that I have attained to this region.³⁸ The vow of fast had been known to Indra. He had, however, kept it a secret. Cukra, the descendent of Bhrigu, obtained a knowledge of it by means of spiritual sight acquired through penances. Blazing with energy as he does, it is Uçanas who first made it known to the universe. I observed that vow, O boon-giving Deity!³⁹ When I accomplished that very superior vow, the Brāhmanas became all gratified with me. A thousand Rishis came thither.⁴⁰ All those Brāhmanas and Rishis, O puissant lord, gratified with me, said,—Do thou repair to the region of Brahman!—It is in consequence of the merits of that vow that I have succeeded in attaining to this region of very

superior felicity. There is no doubt in this.⁴¹ Asked by the supreme Ordainer of all things, I have duly expounded the merits of the vow of fast. In my opinion, there is no penance higher than fast. I bow to thee, O fore most of all the deities ! Be thou gratified with me !—'⁴²

"Bhishma continued,—'King Bhagiratha, who had said so and who deserved every honor, was, on the conclusion of his speech, honored by Brahman according to the rites ordained for that purpose.⁴³ Do thou, therefore, O Yudhishtira, observe the vow of fast and worship the Brāhmanas every day. The words uttered by Brāhmanas can accomplish everything both here and hereafter.⁴⁴ Indeed, the Brāhmanas should ever be gratified with gifts of robes and food and white-complexioned kine and good dwelling houses and mansions. The very deities should gratify the Brāhmanas. Freeing thyself from cupidity, do thou practise this vow of very superior merit that is not known to all !' "⁴⁵

SECTION CIV.

"Yudhishtira said,—'Man, it is said, is endued with a period of life extending for a hundred years, and with energy and might that are considerable. Why then, O grandsire, do human beings die even when they are very young ?¹ By what does a man become endued with longevity, and by what is his life shortened ? Through what does a man acquire the fame that rests upon great achievements ? Through what does one attain to wealth and prosperity ?² Is it by penances, or Brahmacharyya, or silent recitation of sacred Mantras, or drugs ? Is it by his acts, or mind, or speech ? Do thou explain to me this, O grandsire !—'³

"Bhishma said,—'I shall, tell thee what thou askest me. In fact, I shall tell thee what the reason is for which one becomes short-lived, and what the reason is for which one becomes endued with longevity.⁴ I shall also explain to thee the reason for which one succeeds in acquiring the fame that rests on great achievements, and the reason for which one succeeds in acquiring wealth and prosperity. Indeed, I shall

enlighten thee as to the manner in which one must live in order to be endued with all that is beneficial for him.⁵ It is by conduct that one acquires longevity, and it is by conduct that one acquires wealth and prosperity. Indeed, it is by conduct that one acquires the fame that rests upon great achievements both here and hereafter.⁶ The man whose conduct is improper or wicked never acquires a long life. All creatures become afraid of such a man and are oppressed by him.⁷ If, therefore, one wishes one's own advancement and prosperity, one should, in this world, betake to conduct that is proper and good. Good conduct succeeds in dispelling the inauspiciousness and misery of even one that is sinful.⁸ Righteousness has conduct for its indication. They that are good and righteous are so in consequence of the conduct they follow. The indications, again, of good conduct are afforded by the acts of those that are good or righteous.⁹ People esteem that man who acts righteously and who does good acts even if they only hear of him without actually seeing him.¹⁰ They that are atheists, they that are destitute of all acts, they that are disobedient to preceptors and transgress the injunctions of the scriptures, they that are unacquainted with and, therefore, unobservant of duties, and they that are wicked of conduct, become short-lived.¹¹ They that are of improper behaviour, they that transgress all restraints, they that are unscrupulous in respect of sexual congress, become shortlived here and have to go to Hell hereafter.¹² Even those men live for a hundred years who, though destitute of all accomplishments, betake themselves to propriety and righteousness of conduct and become endued with faith and freed from malice.¹³ He that is free from wrath, that is truthful in speech, that never does any injury to any creature in the universe, that is divested of malice and crookedness and insincerity, succeeds in living for a hundred years.¹⁴ He who always breaks little clods of earth, or tears up the grass that grows under his feet, or cuts off his nails with his teeth, or is always impure, or very

* *I. e.*, if a sinful man mends his conduct, he succeeds in warding off the misery and evils to which he would otherwise be subject in consequence of his sins.—T.

restless, never succeeds in acquiring a long life.*¹⁵ One should wake up from sleep at the hour known as the Brāhma Muhurta and then think of both religion and profit. Getting up from bed, one should then wash one's face and mouth, and joining one's hands in an attitude of reverence, then say the morning prayers.†¹⁶ In this way, one should, when evening comes, say one's evening prayers also, restraining speech (with other people) the while. One should never look at the rising sun, nor at the setting sun.‡¹⁷ Nor should one look at the sun when he is in eclipse; nor at his image in the water; nor at midday when he is at the meridian. The Rishis, in consequence of their adoring the two twilights with great regularity succeeded in attaining to longevity.¹⁸ Hence one should, restraining speech, say one's prayers regularly at the two twilights. As regards those Brāhmanas that do not say their prayers at the two twilights, a righteous king should set them to accomplish such acts as are ordained for the Cudras. Persons of every order should never have sexual congress with other people's wives.¹⁹⁻²⁰ There is nothing that shortens life so effectually as sexual congress with other people's wives.²¹ For as many thousand years shall the adulterer have to live in Hell as the number of pores on the bodies of the women with whom he may commit the offence.²² One should dress one's hair, apply collyrium to one's eyes, and wash one's teeth, as also worship the deities, in the forenoon.²³ One should not gaze at urine or fæces, or tread on it or touch it with one's feet. One should not set out on a journey at early dawn, or at midday, or in the evening twilight,²⁴ or with a companion

* What is said here is this: certain persons have the ugly habit of picking up little clods of earth and pound them into dust, while sitting on the ground and engaged in talking. The habit also of tearing the grass while sitting on the ground may be marked. It should be remembered that the people of India in ancient times used often to sit on the bare ground. As to cutting off the nails with the teeth, it is an ugly habit with many young men.—T.

† The 'Brāhma Muhurta' is that when the Sun is just below the horizon.—T.

‡ The prayers said in the morning and the evening are also spoken of as adoring the two twilights.—T.

that is unknown, or with a Cudra, or alone. While going along a road, one should, standing aside, always give way to a Brāhmana, to kine, to kings,²⁵ to an old man, to one that is weighted with a burthen, to a woman quick with child, or to one that is weak. When one meets a large tree that is known, one should walk round it. One should also, when coming upon a spot where four roads meet, walk round it before pursuing one's journey. At midday, or at midnight, or at night in general,²⁶ or at the two twilights, one should not proceed to spots where four roads meet. One should never wear sandals or clothes that have been worn by another.²⁷ One should always observe the vow of Brahmacharyya, and should never cross one's legs. One should observe the vow of Brahmacharyya on the day of the new moon, as also on that of the full moon, as also on the eighth lunar day of both fortnights. One should never eat the flesh of animals not slain in sacrifices. One should never eat the flesh of the back of an animal. One should avoid censuring and calumniating others, as also all kinds of deceitful behaviour.^{*28-30} One should never pierce others with wordy shafts. Indeed, one should never utter any cruel speech. One should never accept anything in gift from a person that is low and vulgar. One should never utter such words as trouble other people or as are inauspicious or as are sinful.³¹ Wordy shafts fall from the mouth. Pierced therewith, the victim grieves day and night. The man of wisdom should never shoot them for piercing the vitals of other people.³² A forest, pierced with shafts or cut down with the axe, grows again. The man, however, that is pierced with words unwisely spoken, becomes the victim of wounds that fester and lead to death.^{†33} Barbed arrows and *Nālikas* and broad-headed shafts are capable of being extracted from the body. Wordy shafts, however, are incapable of being extracted, for

* 'One should always observe the vow of Brahmacharyya' means that one should abstain from sexual congress except with one's wedded wives and in the proper season.—T.

† The Bombay text reads the second line differently. What is meant, the man not growing, is that the wounds inflicted by wordy shafts rankle and fester and lead to death.—T.

they lie embedded in the very heart.³⁴ One should not taunt a person that is defective of a limb or that has a limb in excess, or one that is destitute of learning, or one that is miserable, or one that is ugly or poor, or one that is destitute of strength.³⁵ One should avoid atheism, calumniating the Vedas, censuring the deities, malice, pride, arrogance, and harshness.³⁶ One should not, in wrath, take up the rod of chastisement for laying it upon another. Only the son or the pupil, it has been said, can be mildly chastised for purposes of instruction.³⁷ One should not speak ill of Brāhmanas; nor should point at the stars with one's fingers. If asked, one should not say what the lunation is on a particular day. By telling it, one's life becomes shortened.³⁸ Having answered calls of nature or having walked over a road, one should wash one's feet. One should also wash one's feet before sitting to recite the Vedas or to eat any food.³⁹ These are the three things which are regarded as pure and sacred by the deities and as such fit for the Brāhmana's use, *viz.*, that whose impurity is unknown, that which has been washed in water, and that which has been well spoken of.⁴⁰ Samyāva, Kriçara, meat, Cashakulī, and Pāyasa should never be cooked for one's ownself. Whenever cooked, these should be offered to the deities.⁴¹ One should attend every day to one's fire. One should every day give alms. One should, restraining speech the while, clean one's teeth with the tooth-stick.⁴² One should never be in bed when the sun is up. If one fails any day to be up with the Sun, one should then perform an expiation. Rising from bed, one should first salute one's parents,⁴³ and preceptors, or other seniors deserving of respect. By so doing one attains to long life. The tooth-stick should be cast off when done with, and a new one should be used every day.⁴⁴ One should eat only such food as is not forbidden in the scriptures, abstaining from food of every kind on days of the new moon and the

* 'Samyāva' is a thin cake of unleavened bread, fried with ghee, pounded and again made up into an oblong form with fresh bread, sugar and spices, and again fried with ghee. Kriçara is a kind of liquid food made of milk, sesame, rice, sugar, and spices. Cashkuli is a kind of pie. Pāyasa is rice boiled in sugar and milk.—T.

full moon. One should, with senses restrained, answer calls of nature, facing the north.⁴⁵ One should not worship the deities without having first washed one's teeth. Without also worshipping the deities first,⁴⁶ one should never repair to any person save one's preceptor or one that is old in years or one that is righteous or one that is possessed of wisdom. They that are wise should never see themselves in an unpolished or dirty mirror.⁴⁷ One should never have sexual congress with a woman that is unknown or with one that is quick with child.⁴⁸ One should never sleep with head turned towards the north or the west. One should not lie down upon a bed-stead that is broken or rickety.⁴⁹ One should not sleep on a bed without having examined it first with the aid of a light. Nor should one sleep on a bed with another (such as wife) by one's side. One should never sleep in a transverse direction. One should never make a compact with atheists or do anything in conjunction with them.^{*50} One should never drag a seat with the foot and sit on it. One should never bathe in a state of nudity, nor at night.⁵¹ One possessed of intelligence should never suffer one's limbs to be rubbed or pressed after bathing. One should never smear unguents upon one's body without having first undergone a bath. Having bathed, one should never wave one's cloth in the air (for drying it).⁵² One should not wear wet clothes every day. One should never take off one's body the garlands of flowers one may wear. Nor should one wear such garlands over one's outer garments.⁵³ One should never even talk with a woman during the period of her functional change. One should not answer a call of nature on a field (where crops are grown) or at a place too near an inhabited village.⁵⁴ One should never answer a call of nature on a piece water. One should first wash one's mouth thrice with water before eating any food.⁵⁵ Having finished one's meals, one should wash one's mouth thrice with water and twice again. One should eat, with face turned eastwards, one's food, restraining speech the while and without censuring the food that is eaten.⁵⁶ One

* 'Antarddhāne' implies 'in darkness;,' hence, one should always examine the bed with a light before one lies down on it.—T.

should always leave a remnant of the food that is placed before one for eating. Having finished one's meals, one should mentally touch fire. If one eats with face turned eastwards, one becomes endued with longevity. By eating with face turned southwards, one acquires great fame.⁵⁷ By eating with face turned westwards, one acquires great wealth. By eating with face turned northwards, one becomes truthful in speech. Having finished one's meals, one should wash all the upper holes of one's body with water.*⁵⁸ Similarly, all the limbs, the navel, and the palms of the hands should be washed with water. One should never seat oneself upon husk of corn, or upon hair, or upon ashes, or upon bones.⁵⁹ One should, on no account, use the water that has been used by another for bathing. One should always perform the Homa for propitiating the deities, and recite the Sāvitrī Mantras.⁶⁰ One should always eat in a seated posture. One should never eat while walking. One should never answer a call of nature in a standing posture. One should never answer a call of nature on ashes or in a cowpen.⁶¹ One should wash one's feet before sitting to one's meals. One should never sit or lie down for sleep with wet feet. One who sits to one's meals after having washed one's feet, lives for a hundred years.⁶² One should never touch these three things of great energy, while one is in an impure state, *viz.*, fire, a cow, and a Brāhmana. By observing this rule, one acquires longevity.⁶³ One should not, while one is in an impure state, cast one's eyes on these three things of great energy, *viz.*, the sun, the moon, and the stars.⁶⁴ The life-breaths of a young man go upwards when an old and venerable person comes to his abode. He gets them back by standing up and properly saluting the guest.⁶⁵ Old men should always be saluted. One should, upon seeing them, offer seats with one's own hand. After the old man has taken his seat, the one should seat oneself and remain with hands joined in reverence. When an old man goes along the road, one should always follow him instead of walking ahead.⁶⁶ One should never

* 'Prānān,' the Commentator explains, implies the upper holes of the body, such as the nostrils, the ear-holes, and the eyes.—T.

sit on a torn or broken seat. One should, without using it any longer, cast away a broken vessel of white brass. One should never eat without a piece of upper garment wrapping one's body. One should never bathe in a state of nudity.⁶⁷ One should never sleep in a state of nudity. One should never even touch the remnants of other people's dishes and plates. One should never, while one is in an impure state, touch another's head, for it is said in the scriptures that the life-breaths are all concentrated in the head.⁶⁸ One should never strike another on the head or seize another by the hair. One should not join one's hands together for scratching one's head.⁶⁹ One should not, while bathing, repeatedly dip one's head in water. By so doing one shortens one's life. One who has bathed by dipping the head in water should not, afterwards, apply oil to any part of one's body.⁷⁰ One should never make a meal without eating some sesame. One should never teach (the Vedas or any scriptures) at a time when one is impure. Nor should one study while one is impure.⁷¹ When a storm rises or a bad odor permeates itself in the atmosphere, one should never think of the Vedas. Persons conversant with ancient history recite a Gāthā sung by Yama in days of old. He that runs while impure or studies the Veda under similar circumstances, indeed, that regenerate Brāhman who studies the Veda at forbidden times, loses his Veda and shortens his life.⁷²⁻⁷⁴ Hence, one should never study the Veda with concentrated attention at forbidden times. They who answer a call of nature, with face towards the sun, or towards a blazing fire, or towards a cow, or towards a regenerate person, or on the road, become short-lived. At day time both calls of nature should be answered with face turned towards the north.⁷⁵⁻⁷⁶ At night, those calls should be answered facing the south. By so doing one does not shorten one's life. One that wishes to live long should never disregard or insult any of these three, however weak or emaciated they may appear to be, viz., the Brāhmana, the Kshatriya, and the snake. All three are endowed with virulent poison. The snake, if angry, burns the victim with only a glance of its eye.⁷⁷⁻⁷⁸ The Kshatriya also, if angry, burns the object of his wrath, as soon as he sees him,

with his energy. The Brāhmana, stronger than any of these two, destroys not only the object of his wrath but his whole race as well, not by vision alone but by thought also.*⁷⁹ The man of wisdom should, therefore, tend these three with care. One should never engage in any disputation with one's preceptor.⁸⁰ O Yudhishtira, if the preceptor becomes angry, he should always be pacified by due honors being paid to him. Even if the preceptor happens to be entirely wrong, one should still follow and honor him.⁸¹ Without doubt, calumnious sayings against the preceptor always consume the lives of those that utter them. One should always answer a call of nature at a spot far removed from one's habitation. One should wash one's feet at a distance from one's habitation.⁸² One should always throw the remnants of one's dishes and plates at a spot far removed from one's habitation. Verily, he who desires his own good should do all this. One should not wear garlands of red flowers. Indeed, they who are possessed of wisdom should wear garlands of flowers that are white in hue.⁸³ Rejecting the lotus and the lily, O thou of great might, one may bear on one's head, however, a flower that is red, even if it be an aquatic one.[†]⁸⁴ A garland of gold can under no circumstances become impure. After one has bathed, O king, one should use perfumes mixed with water.[‡]⁸⁵ One should never wear one's upper garment for covering the lower limbs or the lower garments for covering the upper ones. Nor should one wear clothes worn by another. One should not, again, wear a piece of cloth that has not its lateral fringes.[§]⁸⁶ When one goes to bed, O king, one should wear a different piece of cloth. When

* The Brāhmana is more powerful than the other two, for while the other two cannot injure except when they have their foe within sight, the Brāhman can do so even by not seeing his enemy.—T.

† The custom in India, with especially all orthodox Brāhmanas, is to wear a single flower on the head, inserted into the coronal lock. This flower may be a red one, it is said, after the prohibition in the previous Verse about the wearing of garlands made of red flowers.—T.

‡ What is stated here is that dry perfumes should not be used, but those which are pounded with water and made into a paste.—T.

§ The cloth worn by a Hindu has two lateral fringes which contain a lesser number of threads than the body of the cloth.—T.

making a journey along a road, one should wear a different piece of cloth. So also, when worshipping the deities, one should wear a different piece of cloth.*⁸⁷ The man of intelligence should smear his limbs with unguents made of Priyangu, sandal wood, Vilwa, Tagara, and Keçara.†⁸⁸ In observing a fast, one should purify oneself by a bath, and adorn one's person with ornaments and unguents. One should always abstain from sexual congress on days of the full moon and the new moon.⁸⁹ One should never, O monarch, eat off the same plate with another even if that other happens to be of one's own or equal rank. Nor should one ever eat any food that has been prepared by a woman in her functional period.⁹⁰ One should never eat any food or drink any liquid whose essence has been taken off. Nor should one eat anything without giving a portion thereof to persons that wishfully gaze at the food that one happens to take. The man of intelligence should never sit close to one that is impure. Nor should one sit close to persons that are foremost in righteousness.‡⁹¹ All food that is forbidden in religious acts should never be taken even on other occasions. The fruits of the *Ficus religiosa* and the *Ficus Bengalensis* as also the leaves of the *Crotalaria Juncea*,⁹² and the fruits of the *Ficus glomerata*, should never be eaten by one who is desirous of his own good. The flesh of goats, of kine, and the peacock, should never be eaten.⁹³ One should also abstain from dried flesh and all flesh that is stale. The man of intelligence should never eat any salt, taking it up with his hand. Nor should he eat curds and flour of fried barley at night. One should abstain also from flesh of animals not slain in sacrifices. One should, with concentrated attention, eat once on the morning and once in the evening, abs-

* It has been said that Hinduism is a vast system of personal hygiene. These directions about change of attire are scrupulously observed by every rigid Hindu to this day. No change seems to have taken place in the daily habits of the people.—T.

† 'Priyangu' is the *Aglaia Roxburghiana*. 'Vilwa' is the *Ægle marmelos*. 'Tagara' is the *Tabernæmontana coronaria*, Linn. 'Keçara' is probably the *Eclipta alba*, Hassk.—T.

‡ 'Nā' is the nom. sing. of 'Nri,' implying 'man.'—T.

taining entirely from all food during the interval.⁹⁴⁻⁹⁵ One should never eat any food in which one may detect a hair. Nor should one eat at the Crāddha of an enemy. One should eat silently ; one should never eat without covering one's person with an upper garment, and without sitting down.^{*96} One should never eat any food placing it on the bare ground. One should never eat except in a sitting posture. One should never make any noise while eating.† The man of intelligence should first offer water and then food to one that has become his guest, and after having served the guest thus, should then sit to his meals himself. He who sits down to dinner in a line with friends and himself eats any food without giving thereof to his friends, is said to eat virulent poison. As regards water and Pāyasa and flour of fried barley and curds and ghee and honey,⁹⁷⁻⁹⁹ one should never, after drinking or eating these, offer the remnants thereof to others. One should never, O chief of men, eat any food doubtingly.‡¹⁰⁰ One desirous of good should never drink curds at the conclusion of a meal, After the meal is finished, one should wash one's mouth and face with the (right) hand only, and taking a little water should then dip the toe of the right foot in it.¹⁰¹ After washing, one should touch the crown of one's head with the (right) hand. With concentrated attention, one should next touch fire.¹⁰² The man who knows how to observe all these ordinances with care, succeeds in attaining to the foremost place among his kinsmen. One should, after finishing one's meals, wash one's nose and eyes and ears and navel and both hands with water.¹⁰³ One should not, however, keep one's hands wet. Between the tip and the root of the thumb is situate the sacred Tirtha known by the name of Brahma.¹⁰⁴ On the back of the little finger, it is said, is situate the Deva-tirtha.

* One of the Vernacular translators takes 'vālena' as signifying 'child' and 'para-qrāddha' as meaning the first or 'ādya qrāddha'.—T.

† This noise refers to that of chewing or sucking or licking, &c. It is an ugly habit with some people.—T.

‡ Doubting, for example, as to whether he would be able to digest it or not, or whether what he is taking is clean or not, or whether it would be too much for him.—T.

The intervening space between the thumb and the forefinger, O Bhārata,¹⁰⁵ should be used for discharging the Pitri rites, after touching water according to the ordinance.* One should never indulge in other people's calumny. Nor should one ever utter anything that is disagreeable.¹⁰⁶ The man that desires his own good should never seek to provoke against himself the wrath of others. One should never seek to converse with a person that has fallen away from his order. The very sight of such a person should be avoided.¹⁰⁷ One should never come in contact with a fallen person. By avoiding such contact one succeeds in attaining to long life. One should never indulge in sexual congress at day time. Nor should one have congress with a maiden, nor with a harlot nor with a barren woman.¹⁰⁸ One should never have congress with a woman that has not bathed after the expiry of her functional period. By avoiding such acts one succeeds in attaining to a long life. After washing the several limbs directed, in view of religious acts,¹⁰⁹ one should wash one's lips thrice, and once more twice. By doing this, one becomes purified and fit for religious acts. The several organs of sense should each be washed once, and water should also be sprinkled over the whole body.¹¹⁰ Having done this, one should go through the worship of the Pitris and the deities, agreeably to the ordinances of the Vedas. Listen to me, O thou of Kuru's race, as I tell thee what purification¹¹¹ is cleansing and beneficial for a Brāhmana. Before beginning to eat and after finishing the meal, and in all acts requiring purification, the Brāhmana should perform the *āchamana* with water placed on the limb called the Brahma-tirtha.^{†112} After ejecting any matter from the throat or spitting, one should wash one's mouth before one can become pure.

* In offering certain articles at the Crāddha, the articles are first placed on this part of the right hand and then offered with due Mantras to the Pitris.—T.

† The *āchamana* is not exactly washing. When one is directed to perform the *āchamana* after having eaten, there it, of course, implies an act of washing. At the commencement, however, of religious acts, the rite of *āchamana* consists in merely touching the lips and some other parts with water.—T.

A kinsman who happens to be old, or a friend who happens to be poor,¹¹³ should be established in one's house and his comforts looked after as if he were a member of the family. By doing this, one succeeds in acquiring both fame and long life. The establishment of pigeons in one's house is fraught with blessedness, as also of parrots both male and female.¹¹⁴ If these take to one's abode, they succeed in dispelling calamity. The same is the case with cockroaches. If fire-flies and vultures and wood-pigeons and bees¹¹⁵ enter a house or seek residence in it, acts of appropriating the deities should be performed. These are creatures of evil omen, as also ospreys.¹¹⁶ One should never divulge the secrets of high-souled men ; one should never have sexual congress with a forbidden woman. Nor should one ever have such congress with the spouse of a king or with women that are the friends of queens.¹¹⁷ One should never cultivate intimacy with physicians, or with children, or with persons that are old, or with one's servants, O Yudhishtira. One should always provide for friends, for Brāhmanas, and for such as seek one's protection. By doing this, O king, one acquires a long life. The man of wisdom should reside in such a house as has been constructed with the aid of a Brāhmana and an engineer skilled in his profession, if, indeed, O king, he desires his own good.* One should not, O king, sleep at the evening twilight. Nor should one study at such an hour for acquiring any branch of knowledge.¹¹⁸⁻¹²⁰ The man of intelligence should never eat also at such an hour. By acting in this way one acquires a long life. One should never perform any act in honor of the Pitris at night time. One should not deck one's person after finishing one's meals.¹²¹ One should not bathe at night, if one desires one's own advancement. One should also, O Bhārata, always abstain from the flour of fried barley at night.¹²² The remnants of food and drink, as also the flowers with which one has worshipped the deities, should never be used. Inviting a guest at night, one should never, with exces-

* The Brāhmana's aid is necessary in selecting the ground, and settling the longitudinal and other directions of the house, as also in fixing the day of commencing the work of building.—T.

sive courtesy, force him to eat to the point of gratification. Nor should one eat oneself to the point of gratification, at night.¹²³ One should not slay a bird (for eating it), especially after having fed it.* One possessed of wisdom should wed a maiden born in a high family, endued with auspicious indications, and of full age. Begetting children upon her and thus perpetuating one's race by that means,¹²⁴⁻¹²⁵ one should make over one's sons to a good preceptor for acquiring general knowledge, O Bhārata, as also a knowledge of the especial customs of the family, O monarch. The daughters that one may beget should be bestowed upon youths of respectable families, that are again possessed of intelligence.¹²⁶ Sons should also be established and a portion of the family inheritance given to them, O Bhārata, as their provision. One should bathe by dipping one's head in water before one sits down to perform any act in honor of the Pitris or the deities.¹²⁷ One should never perform a Crāddha under the constellation of one's nativity. No Crāddha should be performed under any of the Bhādrapadas (prior or later), nor under the constellation Krittikā, O Bhārata.¹²⁸ The Crāddha should never be performed under any of those constellations that are regarded as fierce (such as Aṅgīrāṣa, &c.) and any of those that, upon calculation, seem to be hostile. Indeed, in this respect, all these constellations should be avoided which are forbidden in treatises on astrology.¹²⁹ One should sit oneself facing either the east or the north while undergoing a shave at the hands of the barber. By so doing, O great king, one succeeds in acquiring a long life.¹³⁰ One should never indulge in other people's calumny or self-reproach, for, O chief of the Bharatas, it is said that calumny is sinful,

* I adopt the meaning which Nilakantha points out. According to him, this Verse forbids the killing of birds at night time and their killing after having fed and adopted them. Indeed, one may buy such birds killed by others for food. The word 'Dwija,' however, may mean both hair and nails. The first part of the line, therefore, may be taken as a prohibition against the cutting of hair and nails after eating. The words 'na samāchareta,' in that case, would be difficult to interpret. Probably, it is this that has led the Commentator to take 'Dwija' here for a bird. Some texts read 'pānam' for 'na cha.' — l.

whether of others or of oneself.¹³¹ In wedding, one should avoid a woman that is deficient of any limb. A maiden too, if such, should also be avoided. A woman of the same Pravaras should also be avoided ; as also one that has any malformation ; as also one that has been born in the race to which one's mother belongs.*¹³² One possessed of wisdom should never have sexual congress with a woman that is old, or one that has abandoned the domestic mode of life for entering the forest mode, or one that is true to her lord, or one whose organs of generation are not healthy or well-formed.†¹³³ It behooveth thee not to wed a woman that is of a yellow complexion, or one that is afflicted with leprosy, or one born in a family in which there has been epilepsy, or one that is low in birth and habits,¹³⁴ or one that is born in a family in which the disease called Cwitra (leprosy) has appeared, or one belonging by birth to a race in which there are early deaths. Only that maiden who is endued with auspicious indications, and who is accomplished for qualifications of diverse kinds,¹³⁵ who is agreeable and handsome, should be wedded. One should wed, O Yudhishtira, in a family that is higher or at least equal to one's own.¹³⁶ One who is desirous of one's own prosperity, should never wed a woman that is of an inferior order or that has fallen away from the order of her birth. Carefully igniting the fire, one should accomplish all those acts which have been ordained and declared in the Vedas or by the Brāhmanas.‡ One should never seek to injure women. Spouses should always be protected.¹³⁷⁻¹³⁸ Malice always shortens life. Hence, one should always abstain from cherishing malice. Sleep at day time shortens life. To sleep after the sun has risen shortens life.¹³⁹ They who sleep at any of the twilights, or at night-fall or who go to sleep in a state of impurity, have their lives shortened. Adultery always shortens life. One should not

* Pravaras indicate the race in which one is born. They are named from the names of the Vedic Rishis.—T.

† The Commentator explains that 'ayonim' implies 'of unknown birth,' and 'vionim' 'of mean birth.'—T.

‡ 'Brāhmanih' here refers to the rituals in the Vedas and not persons of the first order.—T.

remain in a state of impurity after shaving.*¹⁴⁰ One should, O Bhārata, carefully abstain from studying or reciting the Vedas, and eating, and bathing, at eventide.¹⁴¹ When the evening twilight comes, one should collect one's senses for meditation, without doing any act. One should, O king, bathe and then worship the Brāhmanas.¹⁴² Indeed, one should bathe before worshipping the deities and reverentially saluting the preceptor. One should never go to a sacrifice unless invited. Indeed, one may go there without an invitation if one wishes to only see how the sacrifice is conducted. If one goes to a sacrifice (for any other purpose) without an invitation and if one does not, on that account, receive proper worship from the sacrificer, one's life becomes shortened. One should never go alone on a journey to foreign parts. Nor should one ever proceed alone to any place at night.¹⁴³⁻¹⁴⁴ Before evening comes, one should come back to one's house and remain within it. One should always obey the commands of one's mother and father and preceptor,¹⁴⁵ without at all judging whether those commands are beneficial or otherwise. One should, O king, attend with great care to the Vedas and the science of arms.¹⁴⁶ Do then, O king, carefully attend to the practice of riding an elephant, a steed, and a war-chariot. The man who attends to these with care succeeds in attaining to happiness.¹⁴⁷ Such a king succeeds in becoming unconquerable by foes, and sway his servants and kinsmen without any of them being able to get the better of him. The king that attains to such a position and that carefully attends to the duty of protecting his subjects, has never to incur any loss.¹⁴⁸ Thou shouldst acquire, O king, the science of reasoning, as also the science of words, the science of the Gandharvas, and the four and sixty branches of knowledge known by the name of Kalā.¹⁴⁹ One should every day bear the Purāṇas and the Itihāsas and all the other narratives that exist, as also the life-stories of all high-souled personages.¹⁵⁰ When one's spouse passes through her functional period, one should never have congress with her, nor

* The fact is, one is directed to bathe after a shave. One is considered impure after a shave until one bathes.—T.

even summon her for conversation. The man endued with wisdom may accept her companionship on the fourth day after the bath of purification.¹⁵¹ If one indulges in congress on the fifth day from the first appearance of the functional operation, one gets a daughter. By indulging in congress on the sixth day, one happens to have a son. The man of wisdom should, in the matter of congress, attend to this rule (about odd and even days).¹⁵² Kinsmen and relatives by marriage and friends should all be treated with respect. One should, according to the best of one's power, adore the deities in sacrifices, giving away diverse kinds of articles as sacrificial Dakshinā.¹⁵³ After the period ordained for the domestic mode of life has been passed, one should, O king, enter the life of a forest-recluse. I have thus told thee all the indications, in brief of persons who succeed in living long.*¹⁵⁴ What remains untold by me should be heard by thee from the mouths of persons well-versed in the three Vedas, O Yudhishtira. Thou shouldst know that conduct is the root of prosperity. Conduct is the enhancer of fame.¹⁵⁵ It is conduct that prolongs life. It is conduct that destroys all calamities and evils. Conduct has been said to be superior to all the branches of knowledge.¹⁵⁶ It is conduct that begets righteousness, and it is righteousness that prolongs life. Conduct is productive of fame, of long life, and of Heaven. Conduct is the most efficacious rite of propitiating the deities (for bringing about auspiciousness of every kind). The Self-born Brahman himself has said that one should show compassion unto all orders of men.†¹⁵⁷

SECTION CV.

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Tell me, O chief of Bharata’s race, how the eldest brother should behave towards his younger

* ‘Uddega’ means, as the Commentator, explains, ‘in brief.’—T.

† The word rendered ‘conduct’ in the concluding Verses of this lesson is ‘āchārāh.’ It implies not only one’s behaviour to one’s own self and others, i. e., to beings inferior, equal, and superior. The word ‘āchārāh,’ therefore, includes the entire body of acts that one does in this life, including the very sentiments that one cherishes.—T.

brothers, and how the younger brother should behave towards their eldest brother ¹1

“Bhishma said,—Do thou, O son, always behave towards thy younger brothers as their eldest brother should. Thou art always the eldest of all these thy brothers. That high conduct which the preceptor should always adopt towards his disciples should be adopted by thee towards thy younger brothers ²2 If the preceptor happens to be unendued with wisdom, the disciple cannot possibly behave towards him in a respectful or proper way. If the preceptor happens to be possessed of purity and highness of conduct, the disciple also succeeds to attaining to conduct of the same kind, O Bhārata.³ The eldest brother should at times be blind to the acts of his younger brothers, and though possessed of wisdom should at times act as if he does not understand their acts. If the younger brothers be guilty of any transgression, the eldest brother should correct them by indirect ways and means.⁴ If there be good understanding among brothers and if the eldest brother seeks to correct his younger brothers by direct or ostensible means, persons that are enemies, O son of Kunti, that are afflicted with sorrow at the sight of such good understanding and who, therefore, always seek to bring about a disunion, set themselves to disunite the brothers and cause dissension among them.⁵ It is the eldest brother that enhances the prosperity of the family or destroys it entirely. If the eldest brother happens to be unendued with sense and wicked in behaviour, he brings about the destruction of the whole family.⁶ That eldest brother who injures his younger brothers ceases to be regarded as the eldest and forfeits his share in the family property and deserves to be checked by the king.⁷ That man who acts deceitfully, has, without doubt, to go to regions of grief and every kind of evil. The birth of such a person serves no useful purpose even as the flowers of the cane.⁸ That family in which a sinful person takes birth becomes subject to every evil. Such a person bring about infamy, and all the good acts of the

* The flowers of the cane cannot be plucked for being offered to the deities.—T.

family disappear.⁹ Such among the brothers as are wedded to evil acts forfeit their shares of the family property. In such a case, the eldest brother may appropriate the whole Yautuka property without giving any portion thereof to his younger brothers.¹⁰ If the eldest brother makes any acquisition, without using the paternal property and by going to a distant place he may appropriate for his own use, such acquisitions, without giving any share thereof to his younger brothers.¹¹ If unseparated brothers desire (during the lifetime of their father) to partition the family property, the father should give equal shares unto all his sons.¹² If the eldest brother happens to be of sinful acts and undistinguished by accomplishments of any kind, he may be disregarded by his young brothers. If the wife or the younger brother happens to be sinful, her or his good must still be looked after.¹³ Persons conversant with the efficacy of righteousness say that righteousness is the highest good. The Upādhyāya is superior to even ten Āchāryyas. The sire is equal to ten Upādhyāyas.¹⁴ The mother is equal to ten sires or even the whole Earth. There is no senior equal to the mother. Verily, she transcends all in respect of the reverence due to her.*¹⁵ It is for this reason that people regard the mother to deserve so much reverence. After the father has ceased to breathe, O Bhārata, the eldest brother should be regarded as the father.¹⁶ It is the eldest brother who should assign unto them their means of support and protect and cherish them. All the younger brothers should bow to him and obey his authority.¹⁷ Indeed, they should live in dependence upon him, even as they did upon their father while was alive. So far as the body is concerned, O Bhārata, it is the father and the mother that creates it.¹⁸ That birth, however, which the Āchāryya ordains, is regarded as the true birth that is, besides, really unfading and immortal. The eldest sister, O chief of

* An 'Achāryya' is an ordinary instructor. He is called an 'Upādhyāya' who teaches the Vedas. The Upādhyāya is greater than even ten Āchāryyas or ordinary teachers. The father, again, deserves ten times as much respect as is paid to the Upādhyāya. As regards the mother, again, the reverence due to her is greater than what is due to the father. The mother is equal to the whole Earth.—T.

Bharata's race, is like unto the mother. The wife of the eldest brother also is like the mother, for the younger brother, in infancy, receives suck from her.*' "19

SECTION CVI.

"Yudhishtira said,—'The disposition is seen, O grandsire, in all the orders of men, including the very Mlechchas, of observing fasts. The reason, however, of this not known to us.¹ It has been heard by us that only Brāhmanas and Kshatriyas should observe the vow of fasts. How, O grandsire, are the other orders to be taken as earning any merit by the observance of fasts?² How have vows and fasts come to be observed by persons of all orders, O king? What is that end to which one devoted to the observance of fasts attains?³ It has been said that fasts are highly meritorious and that fasts are a great refuge. O prince of men, what is the fruit that is earned in this world by the man that observes fasts?⁴ By what means is one cleansed of one's sins? By what means doth one acquire righteousness? By what means, O best of the Bharatas, doth one succeed in acquiring Heaven and merit?⁵ After having observed a fast, what should one give away, O king? O tell me, what those duties are by which one may succeed in obtaining such objects as lead to happiness?' "

Vaiçampāyana continued,—'Unto Kunti's son by the deity of Dharma, who was conversant with every duty and who

* Many of the Verses of this Lesson are from Manu. The relative positions of the Achāryya, the Upādhyāya, the father, and the mother, as given in Verse 15, is not consistent with Manu. Verse 15 would show that the Upādhyāya was regarded as very much superior to the Achāryya. In Manu, II—140-41, he is called an Achāryya who taught all the Vedas, without any remuneration. He, on the other hand, who taught a particular Veda for a living, was called an Upādhyāya. The first line of Verse 19 corresponds with Manu II—148. The sense is that that birth which one derives from one's parents is subject to death; while the birth derived from the preceptor is true regeneration, unfading and immortal. It is a question whether any other nation paid such respect to persons employed in teaching.—T.

said so unto him, Cāntanu's son, Bhishma, who was acquainted with every duty answered in the following words.⁷

"Bhishma said,—'In former days, O king, I heard of these high merits, O chief of Bharata's race, as attaching to the observance of fasts according to the ordinance!⁸ I had, O Bhārata, asked the Rishi Angiras of high ascetic merit, the very same questions which thou hast asked me today.⁹ Questioned by me thus, the illustrious Rishi, who sprang from the sacrificial fire, answered me even thus in respect of the observance of fasts according to the ordinance.¹⁰

"'Angiras said,—As regards Brāhmanas and Kshatriyas, fasts for three nights at a stretch are ordained for them, O delighter of the Kurus. Indeed, O chief of men, a fast for one night, for two nights, and for three nights, may be observed by them. (They should never go beyond three nights).¹¹ As regards Vaiçyas and Cudras, the duration of fasts prescribed for them is a single night. If, from folly, they observe fasts for two or three nights, such fasts never lead to their advancement.¹² Indeed, for Vaiçyas and Cudras, fasts for two nights have been ordained (on certain special occasions). Fasts for three nights, however, have not been laid down for them by persons conversant with and observant of duties.¹³ That man of wisdom who, with his senses and soul under control, O Bhārata, fasts, by abstaining from one of the two meals, on the fifth and the sixth days of the moon as also on the day of the full moon, becomes endued with forgiveness and beauty of person and conversance with the scriptures. Such a person never becomes childless and poor.¹⁴⁻¹⁵ He who performs sacrifices for adoring the deities on the fifth and the sixth days of the moon, transcends all the members of his family and succeeds in feeding a large number of Brāhmanas. He who observes fasts on the eighth and the fourteenth days of the dark fortnight, becomes freed from maladies of every kind and possessed of great energy. The man who abstains from one meal every day throughout the month called Mārgaṣṭirsha,¹⁶⁻¹⁷ should, with reverence and devotion, feed a number of Brāhmanas. By so doing he becomes freed from all his sins. Such a man becomes endued with prosperity, and all kinds

of grain become his.¹⁸ He becomes endued with energy. In fact, such a person reaps an abundance of harvest from his fields, acquires great wealth and much corn.¹⁹ That man, O son of Kuntī, who passes the whole month of Paus̥ha, abstaining every day from one of two meals, becomes endued with good fortune and agreeable features and great fame.²⁰ He who passes the whole month of Māgha, abstaining every day from one of the two meals, takes birth in a high family and attains to a position of eminence among his kinsmen.²¹ He who passes the whole month of Bhagadāivata, confining himself every day to only one meal, becomes a favourite with women who, indeed, readily own his sway.²² He who passes the whole of the month of Chaitra, confining himself every day to one meal, takes birth in a high family and becomes rich in gold, gems, and pearls.²³ The person, whether male or female, who passes the month of Vaiçākha, confining himself or herself every day to one meal, and keeping his or her senses under control, succeeds in attaining to a position of eminence among kinsmen.²⁴ The person who passes the month of Jaishthya confining himself every day to one meal a day, succeeds in attaining to a position of eminence and great wealth. If a woman, she reaps the same reward.²⁵ He who passes the month of Āshāda, confining himself to one meal a day and with senses steadily concentrated upon his duties, becomes possessed of much corn, great wealth, and a large progeny.²⁶ He who passes the month of Crāvana, confining himself to one meal a day, receives the honors of Abhisheka wherever he may happen to reside, and attains to a position of eminence among kinsmen whom he supports.²⁷ That man who confines himself to only one meal a day for the whole month of Proshthapada, becomes endued with great wealth and attains to swelling and durable affluence.²⁸ The man who passes the month of Āçwin, confining himself to one meal a day, becomes pure in soul and body, possessed of animals and vehicles in abundance, and a large progeny.²⁹ He who passes the month of Kārtika, confining himself to one meal every day, becomes possessed of heroism, many spouses, and great fame.³⁰ I have now told thee, O chief of men, what the fruits are that are obtained

by men by observing fasts for the two and ten months in detail. Listen now, O king, to me as I tell thee what the rules are in respect of each of the lunar days.³¹ The man who, abstaining from it every day, takes rice at the expiration of every fortnight, becomes possessed of a great many kine, a large progeny, and a long life.³² He who observes a fast for three nights every month and conducts himself thus for two and ten years, attains to a position of supremacy among his kinsmen and associates, without a rival to contest his claim and without any anxiety caused by any one endeavouring to rise to the same height.³³ These rules that I speak of, O chief of Bharata's race should be observed for two and ten years. Let thy inclination be manifested towards it.³⁴ That man who eats once in the forenoon and once after evening and abstains from drinking (or eating anything) at the interval, and who observes compassion towards all creatures and pours libations of clarified butter on his sacred fire every day,³⁵ attains to success, O king, in six years. There is no doubt in this. Such a man earns the merit that attaches to the performance of the Agnishtoma sacrifice.³⁶ Endued with merit and freed from every kind of stain, he attains to the region of the Apsuras that echo with the sound of songs and dance, and passes his days in the company of a thousand damsels of great beauty.³⁷ He rides on a car of the complexion of melted gold and receives high honors in the region of Brahma.³⁸ After the exhaustion of that merit such a person comes back to Earth and attains to pre-eminence of position. That man who passes one whole year, confining himself every day to only one meal,³⁹ attains to the merit of the Atirātra sacrifice. He ascends to Heaven after death and receives great honors there.⁴⁰ Upon the exhaustion of that merit he returns to the Earth and attains to a position of eminence. He who passes one whole year observing fasts for three days in succession and taking food on every fourth day,⁴¹ and abstaining from injury from every kind adheres to truthfulness of speech and keeps his senses under control, attains to the merit of the Vājapeya sacrifice.⁴² Such a person ascends to Heaven after death and receives high honors there. That man, O son of Kunti, who

passes a whole year observing fasts for five days and taking food on only the sixth day,⁴³ acquires the merit of the Horse-sacrifice. The chariot he rides is drawn by Chakravākas.⁴⁴ Such a man enjoys every kind of happiness in Heaven for full forty thousand years. He who passes a whole year observing fasts for seven days and taking food on only every eighth day,⁴⁵ acquires the merit of the Gavāmaya sacrifice. The chariot he rides is drawn by swans and cranes.⁴⁶ Such a person enjoys all kinds of happiness in Heaven for fifty thousand years. He who passes a whole year, O king, eating only at intervals of a fortnight,⁴⁷ acquires the merit of a continuous fast for six months. This has been said by the illustrious Angiras himself. Such a man dwells in Heaven for sixty thousand years.⁴⁸ He is roused every morning from his bed by the sweet notes of Vinās and Vallakis and flutes, O king.⁴⁹ He who passes a whole year, drinking only a little water at the expiration of every month, acquires, O monarch, the merit of the Viṣvajit sacrifice.⁵⁰ Such a man rides a chariot drawn by lions and tigers. He dwells in Heaven for seventy thousand years in the enjoyment of every kind of happiness.⁵¹ No fast for more than a month, O chief of men, has been ordained. Even this, O son of Prithā, is the ordinance in respect of fasts that has been declared by sages conversant with duties.⁵² That man who, unafflicted by disease and free from every malady, observes a fast, verily acquires, at every step the merits that attach to Sacrifices.⁵³ Such a man ascends to Heaven on a car drawn by swans. Endued with puissance, he enjoys every kind of happiness in Heaven for a hundred years.⁵⁴ A hundred Apsaras of the most beautiful features wait upon and sport with him.⁵⁵ He is roused from his bed every morning by the sound of the Kānchis and the Nupuras of those damsels.*⁵⁶ Such a person rides on a car drawn by a thousand swans. Dwelling, again, in a region teeming with hundreds of the

* 'Kānchi' is an ornament worn by ladies round the waist or hips. There is a shining disc, of gold or silver, which dangles on the hip. It is commonly called 'Chandra-hāra.' The 'Nupura' is an anklet of silver, with moving bullets placed within, so that when the wearer moves, these make an agreeable noise.—T.

most beautiful damsels, he passes his time in great joy.⁵⁷ The person who is desirous of Heaven does not like the accession of strength when he becomes weak, or the cure of wounds when he is wounded, or the administration of healing drugs when he is ill, or soothings by others when he is angry, or the mitigation, by the expenditure of wealth, of sorrows caused by poverty.⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹ Leaving this world where he suffers only privations of every kind, he proceeds to Heaven and rides on cars adorned with gold, his person embellished with ornaments of every kind. There, in the midst of hundreds of beautiful damsels, he enjoys all kinds of pleasures and happiness, cleansed of every sin.⁶⁰ Indeed, abstaining from food and enjoyments in this world, he takes leave of this body and ascends to Heaven as the fruit of his penances. There, freed from all his sins, health and happiness becomes his, and whatever wishes arise in his mind become crowned with fruition.⁶¹ Such a person rides on a celestial car of golden complexion, of the effulgence of the morning sun, set with pearls and *lapis lazuli*, resounding with the music of Vinās and Murajas, adorned with banners and lamps, and echoing with the tinkle of celestial bells.⁶²⁻⁶³ Such a person enjoys all kinds of happiness in Heaven for as many years as there are pores in his body.⁶⁴ There is no Cāstra superior to the Veda. There is no person more worthy of reverence than the mother. There is no acquisition superior to that of Righteousness, and no penance superior to fast.⁶⁵ There is nothing, more sacred, in Heaven or Earth, than Brāhmanas. After the same manner there is no penance that is superior to the observance of fasts.⁶⁶ It was by fasts that the deities have succeeded in becoming denizens of Heaven. It is by fasts that the Rishis have attained to high success.⁶⁷ Viṣvāmitra passed a thousand celestial years, confining himself every day to only one meal, and as the consequence thereof attained to the status of a Brāhmana.⁶⁸ Chyavana and Jamadagni and Vaṣiṣṭha and Gautama and Bhrigu,—all these great Rishis endued with the virtue of forgiveness—have attained to Heaven through observance of fasts.⁶⁹ In former days Angiras declared so unto the great Rishis. The man who teaches another the merit of fasts has never to suffer any kind

of misery.¹⁰ The ordinances about fasts, in their due order, O son of Kunti, have flowed from the great Rishi Angiras. The man who daily reads these ordinances or hears them read, becomes freed from sins of every kind.¹¹ Not only is such a person freed from every calamity, but his mind becomes incapable of being touched by any kind of fault. Such a person succeeds in understanding the sounds of all creatures other than human, and acquiring eternal fame, becomes the foremost of his species.¹²

SECTION CVII.

“Yudhishtira said,—‘O high-souled grandsire, thou hast duly discoursed to us on the subject of Sacrifices, including the merits in detail that attach to them both here and hereafter.¹ It should be remembered, however, O grandsire, that Sacrifices are incapable of being performed by people that are poor, for these require a large store of diverse kinds of articles.² Indeed, O grandsire, the merit attaching to Sacrifices can be acquired by only kings and princes. That merit is incapable of being acquired by those that are destitute of wealth and divested of ability and that live alone and are helpless.³ Do thou tell us, O grandsire, what the ordinances are in respect of those acts that are fraught with merit equal to what attaches to Sacrifices and which, therefore, are capable of being performed by persons destitute of means!’⁴

“Bhishma said,—‘Listen, O Yudhishtira! Those ordinances that I have told thee of,—those, *viz.*, that were first promulgated by the great Rishi Angirasa, and that have reference to meritorious fasts for their soul,—are regarded as equal to Sacrifices (in respect of the fruits they bring about both here and hereafter).⁵ That man who takes one meal in the forenoon and one at night, without taking any food or drink during the interval, and who observes this regulation for a period of six years in succession, abstaining all the while from

* In Verse 3, ‘Avaguna’ means ‘Nirguna’; ‘Ekātma’ means alone; and ‘asamhata’ implies without associates, i. e., helpless.—T.

injuring any creature and regularly pouring libations on his sacred fire every day, attains, without doubt, to success. Such a man acquires hereafter a car of the complexion of heated gold,⁶⁻⁷ and attains to a residence, for millions of years, in the region of Prajāpati, in the company of celestial damsels, that ever echoes with the sound of music and dance, and blazes with the effulgence of fire.⁸ He who passes three years, confining himself every day to one meal and abstaining all the while from congress with any other woman save his own wedded wife, attains to the merit of the Agnishtoma sacrifice.⁹ Such a man is regarded as having performed a Sacrifice, with plenty of gifts in gold, that is dear to Vāsava himself. By practising truthfulness of speech, making gifts, reverencing the Brāhmanas, avoiding malice,¹⁰ becoming forgiving and self-restrained, and conquering wrath, a man attains to the highest end. Riding on a car of the complexion of white clouds that is drawn by swans, he lives, for millions and millions of years, in the company of Apsaras. Fasting for a whole day and eating only one meal on the second day,¹¹⁻¹² he who pours libations upon his sacred fire for the period of a whole year,—verily, he who observes such a fast and attends every day to his fire and rises every day from bed before sunrise,¹³ attains to the merit of the Agnishtoma sacrifice. Such a man acquires a car drawn by swans and cranes.¹⁴ Surrounded by the most beautiful damsels, he resides in the region of Indra. That man who eats only one meal every third day,¹⁵ and pours libations every day on his sacred fire for a period of a whole year,—indeed, he who thus attends to his fire every day and wakes up from sleep every morning before the sun is up,¹⁶ attains to the high merit of the Atirātra sacrifice. He acquires a car drawn by peacocks and swans and cranes.¹⁷ Proceeding to the region of the seven (celestial) Rishis, he takes up his residence there, surrounded by Apsarās of great beauty. It is well known that such residence lasts for full three Padmas of years.*¹⁸ Fasting

* A 'Padma' is a very large number. Instead of rendering words exactly, I have, in some of the preceding Verses, following the sense, put down 'millions upon millions of years.'—T.

for three days in succession, he who takes only one meal every fourth day, and pours libations every day on his sacred fire,¹⁹ acquires the high merit of the Vājapeya sacrifice. The car he acquires is graced by celestial damsels of great beauty that have Indra for their father.²⁰ He resides in the region of Indra for millions and millions of years, and experiences great happiness by witnessing the sports of the chief of the deities.²¹ Fasting for four days in succession, he who eats only one meal every fifth day, and pours libations on the sacred fire every day for the period of a whole year,²² and who lives without cupidity, telling the truth, reverencing the Brāhmanas, abstaining from every kind of injury, and avoiding malice and sin, acquires the merit of the Vājapeya sacrifice.²³ The car he rides is made of gold and drawn by swans and endued with the effulgence of many suns rising together. He acquires, besides, a palatial mansion of pure white.²⁴ He lives there in great happiness for full one and fifty Padmas of years.*²⁵ Fasting for five days, he who takes food on only the sixth day, and pours libations on his sacred fire every day for a whole year,²⁶ and who performs three ablutions in course of the day for purifying himself and saying his prayers and doing his worship, and who leads a life of Brahmacharyya, divested of malice in his conduct, acquires the merit of the Gomedha sacrifice.²⁷ He acquires an excellent car adorned with pure gold, possessed of the effulgence of a blazing fire and drawn by swans and peacocks.²⁸ He sleeps on the lap of Apsarās and is awakened every morning by the melodious tinkle of Nupuras and Kāñchis.²⁹ He leads such a life of happiness for ten thousand millions of years and three thousand millions besides and eight and ten Padmas and two Patākas.†³⁰ Such a man resides also, honored by all, in the region of Brahma for as many years as there are hairs on the bodies of five thousand

* 'Avartanāni' means years. Four and twelve make sixteen. 'Cara' is arrow. The arrows are five in number as possessed by Kāma, the deity of love. The number of fires also is seven. The compound 'carāgniparimana,' therefore, implies five and thirty. Adding this to sixteen, the total comes up to one and fifty.—T.

† A countless number almost.—T.

bears.³¹ Fasting for six days, he who eats only one meal every seventh day and pours libations on the sacred fire every day, for a full year,³² restraining speech all the while and observing the vow of Brahmacharyya, and abstaining from the use of flowers and unguents and honey and meat,³³ attains to the region of the Maruts and of Indra. Crowned with the fruition of every desire as it springs up in the mind, he is waited upon and adored by celestial damsels.³⁴ He acquires the merits of a sacrifice in which abundance of gold is given away. Proceeding to the regions named, he lives there for countless years in the greatest happiness.³⁵ He who shows forgiveness to all and fasting for seven days eats on every eighth day for a whole year, and, pouring libations every day on the sacred fire, adores the deities regularly,³⁶ acquires the high merits of the Paundarika sacrifice. The car he rides is of complexion like that of the lotus.³⁷ Without doubt, such a man acquires also a large number of damsels, possessed of youth and beauty, some having complexions that are dark, some with complexions like that of gold, and some that are Cyāmās, whose looks and attitudes are of the most agreeable kind.³⁸ He who fasts for eight days and takes only one meal on every ninth day for a whole year, and pours libations on the sacred fire every day,³⁹ acquires the high merits of a thousand Horse-sacrifices. The car he rides in Heaven is as beautiful as a lotus.⁴⁰ He always makes his journeys on that car, accompanied by the daughters of Rudra adorned with celestial garlands and endued with the effulgence of the midday sun or of fires of blazing flames.⁴¹ Attaining to the regions of Rudra, he lives there in great happiness for countless years.⁴² He who fasts for nine days and takes only one meal every tenth day for a whole year, and pours libations on his sacred fire

* Here the exact number of years is not stated.—T.

† Some of the most beautiful ladies in Indian mythology and history have been of dark complexions. Draupadi, the queen of the Pāndavas, was dark in color and was called Krishnā. As to women called Cyāmās, the description given is that their bodies are warm in winter and cold in summer, and their complexion is like that of heated gold.—T.

every day,⁴³ acquires the high merit of a thousand Horse-sacrifices and attains to the companionship of Brāhmana's daughters endued with beauty capable of charming the hearts of all creatures.⁴⁴ These damsels; possessed of such beauty, and some of them possessed of complexion like that of the lotus and some like that of the same flower of the blue variety, always keep him in joy.⁴⁵ He acquires a beautiful vehicle, that moves in beautiful circles and that looks like the dense cloud called Āvarta, verily, it may be said to resemble also an ocean wave.⁴⁶ That vehicle resounds with the constant tinkle of rows of pearls and gems, and the melodious blare of conchs, and is adorned with columns made of crystals and diamonds, as also with an altar constructed of the same minerals.⁴⁷ He makes his journeys on such a car, drawn by swans and cranes and lives for millions and millions of years in great happiness in Heaven.⁴⁸ He who fasts for ten days and eats only ghee on every eleventh day for a whole year and pours libations on his sacred fire every day,⁴⁹ who never, in word or thought, covets the companionship of other people's wives, and who never utters an untruth even for the sake of his mother and father,⁵⁰ succeeds in beholding Mahādeva of great puissance seated on his car. Such a person acquires the high merit of a thousand Horse-sacrifices.⁵¹ He beholds the car of the Self-born Brahman himself approach for taking him on it. He rides on it, accompanied by celestial damsels possessed of great beauty, and complexions as effulgent as that of pure gold.⁵² Endued with the blazing splendour of the Yuga-fire, he lives for countless years in a celestial mansion in Heaven, full of every happiness.⁵³ For those countless years he experiences the joy of bending his head in reverence unto Rudra adored by deities and Dānavas.⁵⁴ Such a person obtains every day the sight of the great deity. That man who having fasted for eleven days eats only a little ghee on the twelfth,⁵⁵ and observes this conduct for a whole year, succeeds in obtaining the merits attaching to all the sacrifices. The car he rides is possessed of the effulgence of a dozen suns.⁵⁶ Adorned with gems and pearls and corals of great value, embellished with rows of swans and snakes and of peacocks and Chakravākas uttering their melo-

dious notes, and beautified with large domes, is the residence to which he attains in the region of Brahman.⁵⁷⁻⁵⁸ That abode O king, is always filled with men and women (who wait upon him for service). Even this is what the highly blessed Rishi Angiras, conversant with every duty, said (regarding the fruits of such a fast).⁵⁹ That man who having fasted for twelve days eats a little ghee on the thirteenth, and bears himself in this way for a whole year, succeeds in attaining to the merits of the divine sacrifice.⁶⁰ Such a man obtains a car of the complexion of the newly-blown lotus, adorned with pure gold and heaps of jewels and gems.⁶¹ He proceeds to the regions of the Maruts that teem with celestial damsels, that are adorned with every kind of celestial ornament, that are redolent with celestial perfumes, and that contain every element of felicity.⁶² The number of years he resides in those happy regions is countless.*⁶³ Soothed with the sound of music and the melodious voice of Gandharvas and the sounds and blare of drums and Panavas, he is constantly gladdened by celestial damsels of great beauty.⁶⁴ That man who having fasted for thirteen days eats a little ghee on the fourteenth day, and bears himself in this way for a full year, obtains the merits of the Mahā-medha sacrifice.†⁶⁵ Celestial damsels of indescribable beauty, and whose age cannot be guessed for they are for ever young in appearance, adorned with every ornament and with armlets of blazing effulgence, wait upon him with many cars and follow him in his journeys.⁶⁶ He is waked every morning from his bed by the melodious voice of swans, the tinkle of Nupuras, and the highly agreeable jingle of Kāñchis. Verily, he resides in a superior abode, waited upon by such celestial damsels, for years as countless as the sands on the shores of Gangā.⁶⁷ That man who, keeping his senses under control, fasts for a fortnight and takes only a one meal on the sixteenth day, and bears himself in this way for a whole year, pouring libations every day on his sacred fire,⁶⁸⁻⁶⁹ acquires the high merits that attach to a thousand Rājasuya sacrifices. The car he rides is

* A very large figure is given.—T.

† This sacrifice consisted of the slaughter of a human being.—T.

possessed of great beauty and is drawn by swans and peacocks.⁷⁰ Riding on such a vehicle, that is, besides, adorned with garlands of pearls and the purest gold and graced with bebies of celestial damsels decked with ornaments of every kind,⁷¹ having one column and four arches and seven altars exceedingly auspicious, endued with thousands of banners and echoing with the sound of music,⁷² celestial and of celestial attributes, embellished with gems and pearls and corals, and possessed of the effulgence of lightning, such a man lives in Heaven for a thousand Yugas, having elephants and rhinoceroses for dragging that vehicle of his.⁷³ That man who having fasted for fifteen days takes one meal on the sixteenth day and bears himself in this way for one whole year, acquires the merits attaching to the Soma sacrifice.⁷⁴ Proceeding to Heaven he lives in the company of Soma's daughters. His body fragrant with unguents whose perfumes are as sweet as those of Soma himself, he acquires the power of transporting himself immediately to any place he likes.⁷⁵ Seated on his car he is waited upon by damsels of the most beautiful features and agreeable manners, and commands all articles of enjoyment.⁷⁶ The period for which he enjoys such happiness consists of countless years.^{*77} That man who having fasted for sixteen days eats a little ghee on the seventeenth day and bears himself in this way for a whole year, pouring libations every day on his sacred fire,⁷⁸ proceeds to the regions of Varuna and Indra and Rudra and the Maruts and Uçanas and Brahman himself.⁷⁹ There he is waited upon by celestial damsels and obtains a sight of the celestial Rishi called Bhurbhuva and grasps the whole universe in his ken.⁸⁰ The daughters of the deity of the deities gladden him there. Those damsels, of agreeable manners and adorned with every ornament, are capable of assuming two and thirty forms.⁸¹ As long as the Sun and the Moon move in the firmament, so long does that man of wisdom reside in those regions of felicity, subsisting upon the succulence of ambrosia and nectar.⁸² That man who having fasted for seventeen

* The exact number of years is given, consisting of a fabulous figure.—T.

days eats only one meal on the eighteenth day, and bears himself in this way for a whole year, succeeds in grasping the seven regions, of which the universe consists, in his ken.⁸³ While performing his journeys on his car, he is always followed by a large train of cars producing the most agreeable rattle and ridden by celestial damsels blazing with ornaments and beauty.⁸⁴ Enjoying the greatest happiness, the vehicle he rides is celestial and endued with the greatest beauty. It is drawn by lions and tigers, and produces a rattle as deep as the sound of the clouds.⁸⁵ He lives in such felicity for a thousand Kalpas, subsisting upon the succulence of ambrosia that is as sweet as nectar itself.⁸⁶ That man who having fasted for eighteen days eats only one meal on the nineteenth day and bears himself in this way for a full year, succeeds in grasping within his ken all the seven regions of which the universe consists.⁸⁷ The region to which he attains is inhabited by diverse tribes of Apsaras and resounds with the melodious voice of Gandharvas. The car he rides is possessed of the effulgence of the sun.⁸⁸ His heart freed from every anxiety, he is waited upon by the foremost of celestial damsels. Decked with celestial garlands, and possessed of beauty of form, he lives in such happiness for millions and millions of years.⁸⁹ That man who having fasted for nineteen days eats only one meal on every twentieth day and bears himself in this way for a full year, adhering all the while to truthfulness of speech and to the observance of other (excellent) rightuials,⁹⁰ abstaining also from meat, leading the life of a Brahmachārin, and devoted to the good of all creatures, attains to the extensive regions, of great happiness, belonging to the Adityas.⁹¹ While performing his journeys on his own car, he is followed by a large train of cars ridden by Gandharvas and Apsaras decked with celestial garlands and unguents.⁹² That man who having fasted for twenty days takes a single meal on the twentyfirst day and bears himself in this way for a full year, pouring libations every day on his sacred fire,⁹³ attains to the regions of Uçanas and Cakra, of the Aṇwins and the Maruts, and resides there in uninterrupted happiness of great measure.⁹⁴ Unacquainted with sorrow of every kind,

he rides the foremost of cars for making his journeys, and waited upon by foremost of celestial damsels, and possessed of puissance, he sports in joy like a celestial himself.⁹⁵ That man who having fasted for one and twenty days takes a single meal on the twentysecond day and bears himself in this way for a full year, pouring libations on his sacred fire every day,⁹⁶ abstaining from injuring any creature, adhering to truthfulness of speech, and freed from malice, attains to the regions of the Vasus and becomes endued with the effulgence of the Sun.⁹⁷ Possessed of the power of going everywhere at will, subsisting upon nectar, and riding on the foremost of cars, his person decked with celestial ornaments, he sports in joy in the company of celestial damsels.⁹⁸ That man who having fasted for two and twenty days takes a single meal on the twentythird day and bears himself in this way for a full year, thus regulating his diet and keeping his senses under control,⁹⁹ attains to the regions of the deity of Wind, of Uṣanas, and of Rudra. Capable of going everywhere at will and always roving at will, he is worshipped by diverse tribes of Apsaras.¹⁰⁰ Riding on the foremost of cars and his person decked with celestial ornaments, he sports for countless years in great felicity in the company of celestial damsels.¹⁰¹ That man who having fasted for three and twenty days eats a little ghee on the twentyfourth day, and bears himself in this way for a full year, pouring libations on his sacred fire,¹⁰² resides for countless years in great happiness in the regions of the Ādityas, his person decked with celestial robes and garlands and celestial perfumes and unguents.¹⁰³ Riding on an excellent car made of gold and possessed of great beauty and drawn by swans, he sports in joy in the company of thousands and thousands of celestial damsels.¹⁰⁴ That man who having fasted for four and twenty days eats a single meal on the twentyfifth day, and bears himself thus for a full year, succeeds in obtaining a car of the foremost kind, full of every article of enjoyment.¹⁰⁵ He is followed in his journeys by a large train of cars drawn by lions and tigers, and producing a rattle as deep as the roar of the clouds,¹⁰⁶ ridden by celestial damsels, and all made of pure gold and possessed of great beauty. Himself riding

on an excellent celestial car possessed of great beauty,¹⁰⁷ he resides in those regions for a thousand Kalpas, in the company of hundreds of celestial damsels, and subsisting upon the succulence of ambrosia that is sweet as nectar itself.¹⁰⁸ That man who having fasted for five and twenty days eats only one meal on the twenty-sixth day, and bears himself thus for a full year in the observance of such a regulation in respect of diet,¹⁰⁹ keeping his senses under control, freed from attachment (to worldly objects), and pouring libations every day on his sacred fire,—that blessed man,—worshipped by the Apsaras, attains to the regions¹¹⁰ of the seven Maruts and of the Vasus. When performing his journeys he is followed by a large train of cars made of excellent crystal and adorned with all kinds of gems, and ridden by Gandharvas and Apsaras who show him every honor. He resides in those regions, in enjoyment of such felicity, and endued with celestial energy, for two thousand Yugas.¹¹¹⁻¹¹² That man who having fasted for six and twenty days eats a single meal on the twenty-seventh day and bears himself in this way for a full year, pouring libations every day on his sacred fire,¹¹³ acquires great merit and proceeding to Heaven receives honors from the deities. Residing there, he subsists on nectar, freed from thirst of every kind, and enjoying every felicity.¹¹⁴ His soul purified of every dross and performing his journeys on a celestial car of great beauty, he lives there, O king, bearing himself after the manner of the celestial Rishis and the royal sages.¹¹⁵ Possessed of great energy, he dwells there in great happiness in the company of celestial damsels of highly agreeable manners, for three thousand Yugas and Kalpas.¹¹⁶ That man who having fasted for seven and twenty days eats a single meal on the twenty-eighth day and bears himself in this way for a full year, with soul and senses under perfect control,¹¹⁷ acquires very great merit, which, in fact, is equal to what is acquired by the celestial Rishis. Possessed of every article of enjoyment, and endued with great energy, he blazes with the effulgence of the midday sun.¹¹⁸ Sportive damsels of the most delicate features and endued with splendour of complexion, having deep bosoms, tapering thighs and full and round hips, decked with celestial orna-

ments,¹¹⁹ gladden him with their company while he rides on a delightful and excellent car possessed of the effulgence of the sun and equipt with every article of enjoyment, for thousands and thousands of Kalpas.¹²⁰ That man who having fasted for eight and twenty days eats a single meal on the twentyninth day, and bears himself in this way for a full year, adhering all the while to truthfulness of speech,¹²¹ attains to auspicious regions of great happiness that are worshipped by celestial Rishis and royal sages. The car he obtains is endued with the effulgence of the sun and the moon,¹²² made of pure gold and adorned with every kind of gem, ridden by Apsaras and Gandharvas singing melodiously.¹²³ Thereon he is attended by auspicious damsels adorned with celestial ornaments of every kind. Possessed of sweet dispositions and agreeable features, and endued with great energy, these gladden him with their company.¹²⁴ Endued with every article of enjoyment and with great energy, and possessed of the splendour of a blazing fire, he shines like a celestial, with a celestial form having every excellencè.¹²⁵ The regions he attains are those of the Vasus and the Maruts, of the Sāddhyas and the Aṣwins, of the Rudras and of Brahman himself.¹²⁶ That man who having fasted for a full month takes a single meal on the first day of the following month and bears himself in this way for a full year, looking on all things with an equal eye, attains to the regions of Brahman himself.¹²⁷ There he subsists upon the succulence of ambrosia. Endued with a form of great beauty and highly agreeable to all, he shines with energy and prosperity like the sun himself of a thousand rays.¹²⁸ Devoted to Yoga and adorned with celestial robes and garlands and smeared with celestial perfumes and unguents, he passes his time in great happiness, unacquainted with the least sorrow. He shines on his car attended by damsels that blaze forth with effulgence emitted by themselves.¹²⁹ Those damsels, the daughters of the celestial Rishis and the Rudras, adore him with veneration.¹³⁰ Capable of assuming diverse forms that are highly delightful and highly agreeable, their speech is characterised by diverse kinds of sweetness, and they are able to gladden the person they wait upon in diverse kinds

of ways.¹³¹ While performing his journeys, he rides on a car that looks like the firmament itself in complexion (for subtlety of the materials that compose it). In his rear are cars that look like the Moon; before him are those that resemble the clouds; on his right are vehicles that are red; below him are those that are blue; and above him are those that are of variegated hue. He is always adored by those that wait upon him.¹³²⁻¹³³ Endued with great wisdom, he lives in the region of Brahman for as many years as are measured by the drops of rain that fall in course of a thousand years on that division of the Earth which is called Jamvudwipa.¹³⁴ Verily, possessed of the effulgence of a deity, he lives in that region of unalloyed felicity for as many years as the drops of rain that fall upon the Earth in the season of showers.¹³⁵ The man who, having fasted for a whole month, eats on the first day of the following month, and bears himself in this way for ten years, attains to the status of a great Rishi. He has not to undergo any change of form while proceeding to Heaven for enjoying the rewards of his acts in this life.¹³⁶ Verily, even this is the status to which one attains by restraining speech, practising self-denial, subjugating wrath, sexual appetite, and the desire to eat, pouring libations on the sacred fire, and regularly adoring the two twilights.¹³⁷ That man who purifies himself by the observance of these and similar vows and practices, and who eats in this way, becomes as stainless as ether and endued with effulgence like that of the Sun himself.*¹³⁸ Such a man, O king, proceeding to Heaven in even his own carnal form, enjoys all the felicity that is there like a deity at his will.¹³⁹

"I have thus told thee, O chief of the Bharatas, what the excellent ordinances are in respect of sacrifices, one after another, as dependent upon the fruits of fasts.†¹⁴⁰ Poor men,

* 'Abhrāvākāṣaṇī' is explained by Nilakantha as 'having the attribute of the 'Avākāṣa' or place of 'Abhra' or the clouds. Hence, as stainless as the ether, which, of course, is the purest of all the elements.—T.

† Sacrifices have for their soul either the actual rites laid down in the scriptures or fasts of several kinds. The observance of fasts is equal to the performance of sacrifices, for the merits of both are equal.—T.

O son of Prithā, (who are unable to perform sacrifices) may, nevertheless, acquire the fruits thereof (by the observance of fasts). Verily, by observing these fasts, even a poor man may attain to the highest end,¹⁴¹ O foremost one of Bharata's race, attending all the while, besides, to the worship of the deities and the Brāhmanas. I have thus recited to thee in detail the ordinances in respect of fasts.¹⁴² Do not harbour any doubt in respect of those men that are so observant of vows, that are so heedful and pure and high-souled, that are so freed from pride and contentions of every kind, that are endued with such devoted understandings, and that pursue their end with such steadiness and fixity of purpose without ever deviating from their path.' "¹⁴³

SECTION CVIII.

"Yudhishthira said,—'Do thou tell me, O grandsire, of that which is regarded as the foremost of all Tirthas. Indeed, it behooveth thee to expound to me what that Tirtha is which conduces to the greatest purity !' "^{*1}

"Bhishma said,—'Without doubt, all Tirthas are possessed of merit. Listen, however, with attention to me as I tell thee what the Tirtha, the cleanser, is of men endued with wisdom.² Adhering to eternal Truth, one should bathe in the Tirtha called Mānasa, which is unfathomable (for its depth), stainless, and pure, and which has Truth for its waters and the understanding for its lake.†³ The fruits, in the form of

* The word 'Tirtha' as already explained (in the Cānti Parvan) means a sacred water. There can be no Tirtha without a piece of water, be it a river, a lake, or even a well. Bhishma, however, chooses to take the word in a different sense.—T.

† The language is figurative. By 'Mānasa' is not meant the trans-Himalayan lake of that name, which to this day is regarded as highly sacred and draws numerous pilgrims from all parts of India. The word is used to signify the Soul. It is fathomless in consequence of nobody being able to discover its origin. It is pure and stainless by nature. It is represented here as having Truth for its waters and the Understanding for its lake. Probably, what is meant by this is that the Understanding, containing the waters of Truth, forms a part of

cleansing, that one acquires by bathing in that Tirtha, are freedom from cupidity, sincerity, truthfulness, mildness (of behaviour), compassion, abstention from injuring any creature, self-restraint, and tranquillity.⁴ Those men that are freed from attachments, that are divested of pride, that transcend all pairs of opposites (such as pleasure and pain, praise and blame, heat and cold, &c.), that have no spouses and children and houses and gardens, &c., that are endued with purity, and that subsist upon the alms given to them by others, are regarded as Tirthas.⁵ He who is acquainted with the truths of all things and who is freed from the idea of *meum*, is said to be the highest Tirtha.* In searching the indications of purity, thy gaze should ever be directed towards these attributes (so that where these are present, thou mayst take purity to be present, and where these are not, purity also should be concluded to be not).⁶ Those persons from whose souls the attributes of Sattwa and Rajas and Tamas have been washed off, they who, regardless of (external) purity and impurity pursue the ends they have proposed to themselves,⁷ they who have renounced everything, they who are possessed of omniscience and endued with universal sight, and they who are of pure conduct, are regarded as Tirthas possessing the power of cleansing.⁸ That man whose limbs only are wet with water is not regarded as one that is washed. He, on the other hand, is regarded as washed who has washed himself by self-denial. Even such a person is said to be pure both inwardly and outwardly.⁹ They who never concern themselves with what is past, they who feel no attachment to acquisitions that are present, indeed, they who are free from desire, are said to be possessed of the highest purity.¹⁰ Knowledge is said to constitute the especial purity of the body. So also freedom from desire, and cheerfulness of mind.¹¹ Purity of conduct constitutes the purity of the mind. The purity that one attains

this Tirtha as the lakes of Pushkara form a part of the Tirtha called by that name.—T.

* 'One freed from the idea of *meum*' implies him who identifies himself with all creatures; him, that is, in whom the idea of self has been extinguished.—T.

by ablutions in sacred waters is regarded as inferior. Verily, that purity which arises from knowledge, is regarded as the best.¹² Those ablutions which one performs with a blazing mind in the waters of the knowledge of Brahma in the Tirtha called Mānasa, are the true ablutions of those that are conversant with Truth.¹³ That man who is possessed of true purity of conduct and who is always devoted to the preservation of a proper attitude towards all, indeed, he who is possessed of (pure) attributes and merit, is regarded as truly pure.¹⁴ These that I have mentioned have been said to be the Tirthas that inhere to the body. Do thou listen to me as I tell thee what those sacred Tirthas are that are situate on the Earth also.¹⁵ Even as especial attributes that inhere to the body have been said to be sacred, there are particular spots on Earth as well, and particular waters, that are regarded sacred.¹⁶ By reciting the names of the Tirthas, by performing ablutions there, and by offering oblations to the Pitris in those places, one's sins are washed off. Verily, those men whose sins are thus washed off succeed in attaining to Heaven when they leave this world.¹⁷ In consequence of their association with persons that are righteous, through the special efficacy of the earth itself of those spots and of particular waters, there are certain portions of the Earth that have come to be regarded as sacred.¹⁸ The Tirthas of the mind are separate and distinct from those of the Earth. That person who bathes in both attains to success without any delay.¹⁹ As strength without exertion, or exertion without strength can never accomplish anything, singly, and as these, when combined, can accomplish all things,²⁰ even so one that becomes endued with the purity that is contributed by the Tirthas in the body as also by that which is contributed by the Tirthas on the Earth, becomes truly pure and attains to success. That purity which is derived from both sources is the best.'²¹

SECTION CIX.

"Yudhishtira said,—'It behooveth thee, O grandsire, to tell me what is the highest, the most beneficial, and the most certain fruit of all kinds of fasts in this world !'¹

"Bhishma said,—'Listen, O king, to what was sung by the Self-born himself and by accomplishing which a person, without doubt, attains to the highest happiness.² That man who fasts on the twelfth day of the moon in the month called Mārgaṣṛisha and worships Krishna as Keçava for the whole day and night, attains to the merit of the Horse-sacrifice and becomes cleansed of all his sins.³ He who, after the same manner, fasts on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Pausha and worships Krishna as Nārāyana, for the whole day and night, attains to the merits of the Vājapeya sacrifice and the highest success.⁴ He who fasts on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Māgha and worships Krishna, as Mādhava, for the whole day and night, attains to the merits of the Rājasuya sacrifice, and rescues his own race (from misery).⁵ He who fasts on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Phālguna and worships Krishna as Govinda, for the whole day and night, attains to the merit of the Atirātra sacrifice and goes to the region of Soma.⁶ He who fasts on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Chaitra and worships Krishna as Vishnu, for the whole day and night, attains to the merit of the Pundarika sacrifice and proceeds to the region of the deities.⁷ By observing a similar fast on the twelfth day of the month of Vaiçākha and worshipping Krishna as the slayer of Madhu for the whole day and night, one attains to the merits of the Agnishtoma sacrifice and proceeds to the region of Soma.⁸ By observing a fast on the twelfth lunar day in the month of Jaishtha and worshipping Krishna as him who had (in Vali's sacrifice) covered the universe with three steps of his, one attains to the merits of the

* Such a man, through the merit he acquires, causes his deceased ancestors and descendants to be freed from every kind of misery in the next world,—T.

Gomedha sacrifice and sports with the Apsaras in great happiness.⁹ By observing a fast on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Āshāda and worshipping Krishna as the dwarf (who beguiled the Asura king Vali), one attains to the merits of the Naramedha* sacrifice and sports in happiness with the Apsaras.¹⁰ By observing a fast for the twelfth lunar day of the month of Crāvana and worshipping Krishna for day and night as Creedhara, one attains to the merits of the sacrifice called Panchayajna and acquires a beautiful car in Heaven whereon he sports in joy.¹¹ By observing a fast on the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Bhādrapada and worshipping Krishna as Hrishikeṣa for the whole day and night, one attains to the merits of the Sautrāmani sacrifice and becomes cleansed of all sins.¹² By observing a fast for the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Āṣwin and worshipping Krishna as Padmanābha, one attains, without doubt, to the merits of that sacrifice in which a thousand kine are given away.¹³ By observing a fast for the twelfth day of the moon in the month of Kārtika and worshipping Krishna as Dāmodara, one attains, without doubt, to the combined merits of all the sacrifices.¹⁴ He who, in this way, adores Krishna for a whole year as Pundarikāksha, acquires the power of recollecting the incidents of his past births and wins much wealth in gold.¹⁵ Similarly, he who worships Krishna every day as Upendra attains to identity with him. After Krishna has been worshipped in this way, one should, at the conclusion of one's vow, feed a number of Brāhmanas or make gifts unto them of ghee.¹⁶ The illustrious Vishnu, that ancient Being, has himself said that there is no fast that possesses merits superior to what attach to fast of this kind.'¹⁷

SECTION CX.

Vaiṣampāyana said,—“Approaching the Kuru grandsire, venerable in years, viz., Bhishma, who was then lying on his

* In the Naramedha, a human being was offered up as the sacrifice.—T.

bed of arrows, Yudhishtira possessed of great wisdom put the following question.¹

"Yudhishtira said,—How, O grandsire, does one acquire beauty of form and prosperity and agreeableness of disposition? How, indeed, does one become possessed of religious merit and wealth and pleasure? How does one become endowed with happiness?"²

"Bhishma said,—In the month of Mārgaśīrṣa, when the moon comes in conjunction with the asterism called Mūla, when his two feet are united with that very asterism, O king, when Rohini is in his calf,³ when his knee-joints are in Aṣwini, and his thighs are in the two Āshādas, when Phālguni makes his anus, and Krittikā his waist,⁴ when his navel is in Bhādrapada, his ocular region in Revati, and his back on the Dhanishthās, when Anurādhā makes his belly,⁵ when with his two arms he reaches the Viṣākhās, when his two hands are indicated by Hastā, when Punarvasu, O king, makes his fingers, Aṣleshā his nails,⁶ when Jyeshthā is known for his neck, when by Cravanā is pointed out his ears, and his mouth by Pushyā, when Swāti is said to constitute his teeth and lips,⁷ when Catabhishā is his smile and Maghā his nose, when Mrigaśīras is known to be in his eye, and Chitrā in his forehead,⁸ when his head is in Bharani, when Ārdrā constitutes his hair, O king, the vow called Chandravrata should be commenced. Upon the completion of that vow, gifts of ghee should be made unto Brāhmanas conversant with the Vedas.⁹ As the fruit of that vow, one becomes possessed of prosperity, beauty of person, and that good luck which brings about knowledge. Indeed, one becomes, in consequence of such a vow, as full (of every blessed attribute) as the Moon himself when he is at full."¹⁰

SECTION CXI.

"Yudhishtira said,—O grandsire, O thou that art possessed of great wisdom and conversant with all the scriptures, I desire to know those excellent ordinances in consequence of which mortal creatures have to travel through their rounds of

rebirth.¹ What is that conduct by following which, O king, men succeed in attaining to high heaven, and what is that conduct by which one sinks in Hell?² When, abandoning the dead body that is as inert as a piece of wood or clod of earth, people proceed to the other world, what are those that follow them thither?³

"Bhishma said,—Yonder comes the illustrious Vrihaspati of great intelligence! Do thou ask his blessed self. The subject is an eternal mystery.⁴ None else is capable of explaining the matter. There is no speaker like Vrihaspati!⁵

Vaiçampāyana said,—While the son of Prithā and the son of Gangā were thus speaking with each other, there came to that spot from the firmament the illustrious Vrihaspati of cleansed soul.⁶ King Yudhishtira, and all others, with Dhritarāshtra at their head, stood up and received Vrihaspati with proper honors. Verily, the worship they offered to the preceptor of the celestials was excellent.⁷ Then Dharma's royal son, Yudhishtira, approaching the illustrious Vrihaspati, asked him the question in proper form, desirous of knowing the truth.⁸

"Yudhishtira said,—O illustrious one, thou art conversant with all duties and all the scriptures. Do thou tell me what is truly the friend of mortal creatures?⁹ Is the father, or mother or son, or preceptor, or kinsmen or relatives, or those called friends, that may be said to truly constitute the friend of a mortal creature? One goes to the next world, leaving one's dead body that is like a piece of wood or a clod of earth. Who is it that follows him thither?¹⁰

"Vrihaspati said,—One is born alone, O king, and one dies alone; one crosses alone the difficulties one meets with, and one alone encounters whatever misery falls to one's lot.¹¹ One has really no companion in these acts. The father, the mother, the brother, the son, the preceptor, kinsmen, relatives, and friends,¹² leaving the dead body as if it were a piece of wood or a clod of earth, after having mourned for only a moment, all turn away from it and proceed to their own concerns.¹³ Only Righteousness follows the body that is thus abandoned by them all. Hence, it is plain, that Righteousness, is the only friend and that Righteousness only should be

sought by all.¹⁴ One endued with righteousness would attain to that high end which is constituted by Heaven. If endued with unrighteousness he attains to Hell.¹⁵ Hence, the man of intelligence should always seek to acquire righteousness through wealth won by lawful means. Righteousness is the one only friend which creatures have in the world hereafter.¹⁶ Led by cupidity, or stupefaction, or compassion, or fear, one destitute of much knowledge is seen to do improper acts, for the sake of even another, his judgment thus stupefied by cupidity.^{*17} Righteousness, wealth, and pleasure,—these three constitute the fruit of life. One should acquire these three by means of being free from impropriety and sin.¹⁸

“Yudhishtira said,—‘I have carefully heard the words spoken by thy illustrious self,—these words that are fraught with righteousness, and that are highly beneficial. I wish now to know of the existence of the body (after death).†¹⁹ The dead body of man becomes subtile and unmanifest. It becomes invisible. How is it possible for Righteousness to follow it ?’²⁰

“Vrihaspati said,—‘Earth, Wind, Ether, Water, Light, Mind, Yama (the king of the dead), Understanding, the Soul, as also Day and Night, all together behold as witnesses the merits (and demerits) of all living creatures. With these, Righteousness follows the creature (when dead).‡²¹⁻²² When the body becomes bereft of life, skin, bones, flesh, the vital seed, and blood, O thou of great intelligence, leave it at the same time.²³ Endued with merit (and demerit) Jiva, (after the destruction of this body) attains to another. After the attainment by Jiva of that body, the presiding deities of the five elements once more behold as witnesses all his acts good and bad.²⁴ What else dost thou wish to hear? If endued

* The sense seems to be this : One that is not possessed of much learning is run to do improper acts. These acts are all done for another, viz., one's body and the senses and not oneself. The *para* here is the Notself.—T.

† ‘Nichayam’ is, as explained by the Commentator, ‘Avasthitim.’—T.

‡ The sense is that when these leave the body, they are accompanied by Righteousness.—T.

with righteousness, Jiva enjoys happiness. What other topic, belonging to this or the other world, shall I discourse upon ?²⁵

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Thy illustrious self has explained how Righteousness follows Jiva. I desire to know how the vital seed is originated.’²⁶

“Vrihaspati said,—‘The food that these deities, O king, who dwell in the body, *viz.*, Earth, Wind, Ether, Water, Light, and Mind, eat²⁷ gratifies them. When those five elements become gratified, O monarch, with Mind numbering as their sixth, their vital seed then becomes generated, O thou of cleansed soul !²⁸ When an act of union takes place between male and female, the vital seed flows out and causes conception. I have thus explained to thee what thou hadst asked. What else dost thou wish to hear !’²⁹

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Thou hast, O illustrious one, said how conception takes place. Do thou explain how the Jiva that takes birth grows (by becoming possessed of body).’³⁰

“Vrihaspati said,—‘As soon as Jiva enters the vital seed, he becomes overwhelmed by the elements already mentioned. When Jiva becomes disunited therewith, he is said to attain to the other end (*viz.*, death).³¹ Endued as Jiva becomes with all those elements, he attains, in consequence thereof, a body. The deities that preside over those elements behold as witnesses all his acts good and bad. What else dost thou wish to hear ?’³²

“Yudhishtira said,—‘Leaving off skin and bone and flesh, and becoming destitute of all those elements, in what does Jiva reside, O illustrious one, for enjoying and enduring happiness and misery ?’³³

“Vrihaspati said,—‘Endued with all his acts, Jiva quickly enters the vital seed, and availing of the functional flow of women, takes birth in time, O Bhārata.³⁴ After birth, Jiva receives woe and death from the messengers of Yama. Indeed, misery and a painful round of rebirth are his inheritance.³⁵ Endued with life, O king, Jiva in this world, from the moment of his birth, enjoys and endures his own (previous) acts, depending upon righteousness (and its reverse).³⁶ If Jiva, according to the best of his power, follows righteousness from

the day of his birth, he then succeeds in enjoying, when re-born, happiness without interruption.³⁷ If, on the other hand, without following righteousness without interruption, he acts sinfully, he reaps happiness at first as the reward of his righteousness and endures misery after that.³⁸ Endued with unrighteousness, Jiva has to go to the dominions of Yama and suffering great misery there, he has to take birth in an intermediate order of being.^{*39} Listen to me as I tell thee what the different acts are by doing which Jiva, stupefied by folly, has to take birth in different orders of being,⁴⁰ as declared in the Vedas, the scriptures, and the (sacred) histories. Mortals have to go to the frightful regions of Yama. In those regions, O king, there are places that are fraught with every merit and that are worthy on that account of being the abodes of the very deities.⁴¹ There are, again, places in those regions that are worse than those which are inhabited by animals and birds. Indeed, there are spots of these kinds in the abode of Yama which (so far as its happier regions are concerned) is equal to the region of Brahman himself in merits.⁴² Creatures, bound by their acts, endure diverse kinds of misery. I shall, after this, tell thee what those acts and dispositions are in consequence of which a person obtains to an end that is fraught with great misery and terror.⁴³⁻⁴⁴ If a regenerate person, having studied the four Vedas, becomes stupefied by folly and accepts a gift from a fallen man, he has then to take birth in the assinine order.⁴⁵ He has to live as an ass for five and ten years. Casting off his assinine form, he has next to take birth as an ox and which state he has to live for seven years.⁴⁶ Casting off his bovine form, he has next to take birth as a Rākshasa of the regenerate order. Living as a Rākshasa of the regenerate order for three months, he then regains his status (in his next birth) of a Brāhmana.^{†47} A Brāhmana, by officiating at the sacrifice of a fallen person, has to take birth as a vile worm. In this form he has to live for five and

* Intermediate, i. e., between deities and human beings ; hence, animals and birds.—T.

† 'Brahma-Rākshasa' is a Rākshasa that belongs, like Rāvana and others, by birth to the regenerate order.—T.

ten years, O Bhārata.⁴⁸ Freed from the status of a worm, he next takes birth as an ass. As an ass he has to live for five years, and then as a hog, in which state also he has to remain for as many years.⁴⁹ After that, he takes birth as a cock, and living for five years in that form, he takes birth as a jackal and lives for as many years in that state. He has next to take birth as a dog, and living thus for a year he regains his status of humanity.⁵⁰ That foolish disciple who offends his preceptor by doing any injury to him, has certainly to undergo three transformations in this world.⁵¹ Such a person, O monarch, has in the first instance to become a dog. He has then to become a beast of prey, and then an ass. Living his assinine form, he has to wander for sometime in great affliction as a spirit. After the expiration of that period, he has to take birth as a Brāhmaṇa.⁵² That sinful disciple who even in thought commits adultery with the wife of his preceptor, has in consequence of such a sinful heart, to undergo many fierce shapes in this world.⁵³ First taking birth in the canine order he has to live for three years. Casting off the canine form when death comes, he takes birth as a worm or vile vermin.⁵⁴ In this form he has to live for a year. Leaving that form he succeeds in regaining his status as a human being of the regenerate order.⁵⁵ If the preceptor kills, without reason, his disciple who is even as a son to him, he has, in consequence of such a wilful act of sin on his part, to take birth as a beast of prey.⁵⁶ That son who disregards his father and mother, O king, has to take birth, after leaving off his human form as an animal of the assinine order.⁵⁷ Assuming the assinine form he has to live for ten years. After that he has to take birth as a crocodile, in which form he has to live for a year. After that he regains the human form.⁵⁸ That son with whom his parents become angry, has, in consequence of his evil thoughts towards them, to take birth as an ass.⁵⁹ As an ass he has to live for ten months. He has then to take birth as a dog and to remain as such for four and ten months. After that he has to take birth as a cat and living in that form for seven months he regains his status of humanity.⁶⁰ Having spoken ill of parents, one has to take birth as a Sārīka. Striking them

one has to take birth, O king, as a tortoise.⁶¹ Living as a tortoise for ten years, he has next to take birth as a porcupine. After that he has to take birth as a snake, and living for six months in that form he regains the status of humanity.⁶² That man who, while subsisting upon the food that his royal master supplies, commits acts that are injurious to the interests of his master,—that man, thus stupefied by folly, has after death to take birth as an ape.⁶³ For ten years he has to live as an ape, and after that for five years as a mouse. After that he has to become a dog, and living in that form for a period of six months he succeeds in regaining his status of humanity.⁶⁴ That man who misappropriates what is deposited with him in trustfulness, has to undergo a hundred transformations. He at last takes birth as a vile worm.⁶⁵ In that order he has to live for a period of ten and five years, O Bhārata. Upon the exhaustion of his great demerit in this way, he succeeds in regaining his status of humanity.⁶⁶ That man who harbours malice towards ethers has, after death, to take birth as a Cārṅgaka. That man of wicked understanding who becomes guilty of breach of trust has to take birth as a fish.⁶⁷ Living as a fish for eight years, he takes birth, O Bhārata, as a deer. Living as a deer for four months, he has next to take birth as a goat.⁶⁸ After the expiration of a full year he casts off his goatish body, he takes birth then as a worm. After that he succeeds in regaining his status of humanity.⁶⁹ That shameless insensate man who, through stupefaction, steals paddy, barley, sesame, Masha, Kulattha, oil-seeds, oats, Kalāya, Mudga, wheat, Atasi, and other kinds of corn, has to take birth as a mouse.^{*70-71} After leading the life for sometime he has to take birth as a hog. As soon as he takes birth as a hog he has to die of disease.⁷² In consequence of his sin, that foolish man has next to take birth as a dog, O king. Living as a dog for five years, he then regains his status of humanity.⁷³ Having committed an act of adultery with the spouse of

* 'Masha' is *Phaseolus Roxburghii*. 'Kulattha' is *Dolichos biflosus*, Roxb. 'Kalāya' is *Pisum Sativum*, Linn. 'Mudga' is *Phaseolus Mungo*, Linn. 'Atasi' is *Linum usitattissimum*, Linn.—T.

another man, one has to take birth as a wolf. After that he has to assume the forms of a dog and jackel and vulture. He has next to take birth as a snake and then as a Kanka and then as a crane.*⁷⁴ That man of sinful soul who, stupefied by folly, commits an act of sexual congress with the spouse of a brother, has to take birth as a male Kokila and to live in that form for a whole year, O king.⁷⁵ He who, through lust, commits an act of sexual congress with the wife of a friend, or the wife of preceptor, or the wife of his king, has after death to take the form of a hog.⁷⁶ He has to live in his porcine form for five years and then to assume that of a wolf for ten years. For the next five years he has to live as a cat and then for the next ten years as a cock.⁷⁷ He has next to live for three months as an ant, and then as a worm for a month. Having undergone these transformations he has next to live as a vile worm for four and ten years.⁷⁸ When his sin becomes exhausted by such chastisement, he at last regains the status of humanity.⁷⁹ When a wedding is about to take place, or a sacrifice, or an act of gifts is about to be made, O thou of great puissance, the man who offers any obstruction, has to take birth in his next life as a vile worm.⁸⁰ Assuming such a form he has to live, O Bhārata, for five and ten years. When his demerit is exhausted by such suffering, he regains the status of humanity.⁸¹ Having once bestowed his daughter in marriage upon a person, he who seeks to bestow her again upon a second husband, has, O king, to take birth among vile worms.⁸² Assuming such a form, O Yudhishtira, he has to live for a period of three and ten years. Upon the exhaustion of his demerit by such sufferance, he regains the status of humanity.⁸³ He who eats without having performed the rites in honor of the deities or those in honor of the Pitris or without having offered (even) oblations of water to both the Rishis and the Pitris, has to take birth as a crow.⁸⁴ Living as a crow for a hundred years, he next assumes the form of a cock. His next transformation is that of a snake for a month. After this, he regains the status of humanity.⁸⁵ He who disregards

* A Kanka is a bird of prey.—T.

eldest brother who is even like a sire, has, after death, to take birth in the order of cranes.* Having assumed that form he has to live in it for two years. Casting off that form at the conclusion of that period, he regains the status of humanity.⁸⁷ That Cudra who has sexual intercourse with a Brāhmani woman, has, after death, to take birth as a hog.⁸⁸ As soon as he takes birth in the porcine order he dies of disease, O king. The wretch has next to take birth as a dog, O king, in consequence of his dire act of sin.⁸⁹ Casting off his canine form he regains, upon the exhaustion of his demerit, the status of humanity. The Cudra who begets offspring upon a Brāhmani woman, leaving off his human form, becomes reborn as a mouse.⁹⁰ The man who becomes guilty of ingratitude, O king, has to go to the regions of Yama and there to undergo very painful and severe treatment at the hands of the messengers, provoked to fury, of the grim king of the dead.⁹¹ Clubs with heavy hammers and mallets, sharp-pointed lances, heated jars, all fraught with severe pain, frightful forests of sword-blades, heated sands, thorny Cālmalis,⁹²—these and many other instruments of the most painful torture such a man has to endure in the regions of Yama, O Bhārata!⁹³ The ungrateful person, O chief of Bharata's race, having endured such terrible treatment in the regions of the grim king of the dead, has to come back to this world and take birth among vile vermin.*⁹⁴ He has to live as a vile vermin for a period of five and ten years, O Bhārata. He has then to enter the womb and die prematurely before birth.⁹⁵ After this, that person has to enter the womb a hundred times in succession. Indeed, having undergone a hundred rebirths, he at last becomes born as a creature in same intermediate order between man and inanimate nature.⁹⁶ Having endured misery for a great many years, he has to take birth as a hairless tortoise.⁹⁷ A person that steals curds has to take birth as a crane. One becomes a

* He is repeatedly struck with the clubs and hammers and mallets. He is frequently impaled. He is confined with fiery vessels. He is dragged with forests of sword-blades. He is made to walk over heated sand. He is rubbed against thorny Cālmalis. The Cālmali is the *Bombax Malabaricum*.—T.

monkey by stealing raw fish. That man of intelligence who steals honey has to take birth as a gadfly.⁹⁸ By stealing fruits or roots or cakes one becomes an ant. By stealing Nishpāva one becomes a Halagolaka.⁹⁹ By stealing Pāyasa one becomes in one's next birth a Tittiri bird. By stealing cakes one becomes a screech-owl.¹⁰⁰ That man of little of intelligence who steals iron has to take birth as a cow. That man of little understanding who steals white brass has to take birth as a bird of the Hārīta species.¹⁰¹ By stealing a vessel of silver one becomes a pigeon. By stealing a vessel of gold one has to take birth as a vile vermin.¹⁰² By stealing a piece of silken cloth, one becomes a Krikara. By stealing a piece of cloth made of red silk, one becomes a Vartaka.†¹⁰³ By stealing a piece of muslin one becomes a parrot. By stealing a piece of cloth that is of fine texture, one becomes a duck after casting off one's human body.¹⁰⁴ By stealing a piece of cloth made of cotton, one becomes a crane. By stealing a piece of cloth made of jute, one becomes a sheep in one's next life.¹⁰⁵ By stealing a piece of linen, one has to take birth as a hare. By stealing different kinds of colouring matter one has to take birth as a peacock.¹⁰⁶ By stealing a piece of red cloth one has to take birth as a bird of the Jivajivaka species. By stealing unguents (such as sandalpaste) and perfumes in this world,¹⁰⁷ the man possessed of cupidity, O king, has to take birth as a mole. Assuming the form of a mole one has to live in it for a period of five and ten years.¹⁰⁸ After the exhaustion of his demerit by such sufferance he regains the status of humanity. By stealing milk, one becomes a crane.¹⁰⁹ That man, O king, who, through stupefaction of the understanding, steals oil, has to take birth, after casting off this body, as an animal that subsists upon oil as his form.‡¹¹⁰ That wretch who, himself

* The Commentator explains that 'Nishpāva' means 'Rajamāsha' which is a kind of beans. It is the *Dolichas catjung*. 'Halagolaka' is a long-tailed worm.—T.

† A 'Krikara' is a kind of partridge. It is spelt also as 'Krikala' or 'Krikana.' A 'Vartaka' is a sort of quail.—T.

‡ 'Tailapāyin' is, literally, one that drinks oil. The name is applied to a cockroach.—T.

well-armed, slays another while that other is unarmed, from motives of obtaining his victim's wealth or from feelings of hostility, has, after casting off his human body, to take birth as an ass.¹¹¹ Assuming that assine form he has to live for a period of two years and then he meets with death at the edge of a weapon. Casting off in this way his assine body he has to take birth in his next life as a deer always filled with anxiety (at the thought of foes that may kill him).¹¹² Upon the expiration of a year from the time of his birth as a deer, he has to yield up his life at the point of a weapon. Thus casting off his form of a deer, he next takes birth as a fish and in consequence of being dragged up in a net,¹¹³ on the expiration of the fourth month. He has next to take birth as a beast of prey. For ten years he has to live in that form, and then he takes birth as a pard in which form he has to live for a period of five years.¹¹⁴ Impelled by the change that is brought about by time, he then casts off that form, and, his demerit having been exhausted, he regains the status of humanity.¹¹⁵ That man of little understanding who kills a woman has to go to the regions of Yama and to endure diverse kinds of pain and misery. He then has to pass through full one and twenty transformations.¹¹⁶ After that, O monarch, he has to take birth as a vile vermin. Living as a vermin for twenty years, he regains the status of humanity.¹¹⁷ By stealing food, one has to take birth as a bee. Living for many months in the company of other bees,¹¹⁸ his demerit becomes exhausted and he regains the status of humanity. By stealing paddy, one becomes a cat.¹¹⁹ That man who steals food mixed with sesame cakes has in his next birth to assume the form of a mouse large or small according to the largeness or smallness of the quantity stolen.¹²⁰ He bites human beings every day and as the consequence thereof becomes sinful and travels through a varied round of rebirths. That man of foolish understanding who steals ghee has to take birth as a gallinule.¹²¹ That wicked wight who steals fish has to take birth as a crow. By stealing salt one has to take birth as an imitating parrot.¹²² That man who misappropriates what is deposited with him through confidence, has to sustain a dimi-

do people succeed in attaining to an auspicious end in this world? By what acts also do people attain to auspicious end in Heaven?'²

"Vrihaspati said,—'By committing sinful acts with perverted mind, one yields to the sway of unrighteousness and as a consequence goeth to hell.³ That man who, having perpetrated sinful acts through stupefaction of mind, feels the pangs of repentance and sets his heart on contemplation (of the deity), has not to endure the consequences of his sins.⁴ One becomes freed from one's sins in proportion as one repents for them.⁵ If one, having committed a sin, O king, proclaims it in the presence of Brāhmanas conversant with duties, one becomes quickly cleansed from the obloquy arising from one's sin.⁶ Accordingly as one proclaims one's sins, fully or otherwise, with concentrated mind, one becomes cleansed therefrom fully or otherwise, like a snake freed from his diseased slough.⁷ By making, with a concentrated mind, gifts of diverse kinds unto a Brāhmana, and concentrating the mind (on the deity), one attains to an auspicious end.⁸ I shall now tell thee what those gifts are, O Yudhishtira, by making which a person, even if guilty of having committed sinful acts, may become endued with merit.⁹ Of all kinds of gifts, that of food is regarded as the best. One desirous of attaining to merit should, with a sincere heart, make gifts of food. Food is the life-breath of men. From it all creatures are born. All the worlds of living creatures are established upon food. Hence food is applauded.¹¹ The deities, Rishis, Pitris, and men, all praise food. King Rantideva, in days of old, proceeded to Heaven by making gifts of food.¹² Food that is good and that has been acquired lawfully, should be given, with a cheerful heart, unto such Brāhmanas as are possessed of Vedic lore.¹³ That man has never to take birth in an intermediate order, whose food, given with a cheerful heart, is taken by a thousand Brāhmanas.¹⁴ A person, O chief of men, by feeding ten thousand Brāhmanas, becomes cleansed of unrighteousness and devoted to Yoga practices.¹⁵ A Brāhmana conversant with the Vedas, by giving away food acquired by him as alms, unto a Brāhmana devoted to the study of the Vedas, succeeds in attaining to happiness

here.¹⁶ That Kshatriya who, without taking anything that belongs to a Brāhmana, protects his subjects lawfully, and makes gifts of food, obtained by the exercise of his strength, unto Brāhmanas foremost in Vedic knowledge, with concentrated heart, succeeds by such conduct, O thou of righteous soul, in cleansing himself, O son of Pāndu, of all his sinful acts.¹⁷⁻¹⁸ That Vaiçya who divides the produce of his fields into six equal shares and makes a gift of one of those shares unto Brāhmanas, succeeds by such conduct in cleansing himself from every sin.¹⁹ That Cudra who, earning food by hard labour and at the risk of life itself, makes a gift of it to Brāhmanas, becomes cleansed from every sin.²⁰ That man who, by putting forth his physical strength, earns food without doing any act of injury to any creature, and makes gift of it unto Brāhmanas succeeds in avoiding all calamities.²¹ A person by cheerfully making gifts of food acquired by lawful means unto Brāhmanas pre-eminent for Vedic lore, becomes cleansed of all his sins.²² By treading in the path of the righteous one becomes freed from all sins. A person by making gifts of such food as is productive of great energy, becomes himself possessed of great energy.²³ The path made by charitable persons is always trod by those that are endued with wisdom. They that make gifts of food are regarded as givers of life. The merit they acquire by such gifts is eternal.²⁴ Hence, a person should, under all circumstances, seek to earn food by lawful means, and having earned to make always gifts of it unto deserving men. Food is the great refuge of the world of living creatures.²⁵ By making gifts of food, one has never to go to hell. Hence, one should always make gifts of food, having earned it by lawful means.²⁶ The house-holder should always seek to eat after having made a gift of food unto a Brāhmana. Every man should make the day fruitful by making gifts of food.²⁷ A person by feeding, O king, a thousand Brāhmanas all of whom are conversant with duties and the scriptures and the sacred histories,²⁸ has not to go to Hell and to return to this world for undergoing rebirths. Endued with the fruition of

* That day is sterile or lost in which no gift is made of food.—T.

every wish, he enjoys great felicity hereafter.²⁹ Possessed of such merit, he sports in happiness, freed from every anxiety, possessed of beauty of form and great fame and endued with wealth.³⁰ I have thus told thee all about the high merit of gifts of food. Even this is the root of Righteousness and merit, as also of all gifts, O Bhārata !

SECTION CXIII.

"Yudhishthira said,—'Abstaintion from injury, the observance of the Vedic ritual, meditation, subjugation of the senses, penances, and obedient services rendered to the preceptors, which amongst these is fraught with the greatest merit with respect of a person ?'¹

"Vrihaspati said,—'All these six are fraught with merit. They are different doors of Righteousness. I shall discourse upon them presently. Do thou listen to them, O chief of the Bharatas !' I shall tell thee what constitutes the highest good of a human being. That man who practices the religion of universal compassion achieves his highest good.³ That man who keeps under control the three faults, viz., lust, wrath, and cupidity, by throwing them up on creatures, (and practises the virtue of compassion), attains success.⁴ He who, from motives of his own happiness, slays harmless creatures with the rod of chastisement, never attains to happiness in the next world.⁵ That man who regards all creatures as his own self, and behaves towards them as towards his own self, laying aside the rod of chastisement and completely subjugating his wrath, succeeds in attaining to happiness.⁶ The very deities, who are desirous of a fixed abode, become stupefied in ascertaining the track of that person who constitutes himself the soul of all creatures and looks upon them all as his own self, for such a

* 'Kāma' and 'krodha' are mentioned ; but the use of 'cha' gives by implication cupidity. What is meant by 'nidhāya-sarvabhuteshu' is, dividing them into infinite small parts, to cast them off from oneself to others. It is painful to see how the Burdwan translators misunderstand Verses 2 and 3. They read 'Hanti' for 'Hanta,' and write ridiculous nonsense.—T.

person leaves no track behind.*⁷ One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of Righteousness. One by acting in a different way, yielding to desire, becomes guilty of unrighteousness.⁸ In refusals and gifts, in happiness and misery, in the agreeable and the disagreeable, one should judge of their effects by a reference to one's own self.[†]⁹ When one injures another, the injured turns round and injures the injurer. Similarly, when one cherishes another, that other cherishes the cherisher. One should frame one's rule of conduct according to this. I have told thee what Righteousness is even by this subtle way.' "¹⁰

Vaiçampāyana continued,—“The preceptor of the deities, possessed of great intelligence, having said this unto king Yudhishtira the just, ascended upwards for proceeding to Heaven, before our eyes.”¹¹

SECTION CXIV.

Vaiçampāyana said,—“After this, king Yudhishtira, endowed with great energy, and the foremost of eloquent men, addressed his grandsire on his bed of arrows, in the following words.¹

“Yudhishtira said,—“Thou of great intelligence, the Rishis and Brāhmanas and the deities, led by the authority of the Vedas, all applaud that religion which has compassion for its indication.² But, O king, what I ask thee is this: how does a man, who has perpetrated acts of injury to others in word, thought and deed, succeed in cleansing himself from misery?”³

* In the first line, after ‘Sarvabhūtāni’ ‘ātmatvena’ is understood. The sense of this Verse seems to be this: such a man leaves no trace behind him, for he becomes identified with Brahma. He is, therefore, said to be ‘apada.’ The deities, on the other hand, are ‘padaishinah’, for they desire a fixed abode such a Heaven or a spot fraught with felicity.—T.

† The sense is that when one refuses a solicitation one should think how one would feel if another were to refuse the solicitations one addressed to that other. So with regard to the rest.—T.

“Bhishma said,—‘Utterers of Brahma have said that there are four kinds of compassion or abstention from injury. If even one of those four kinds be not observed, the religion of compassion, it is said, is not observed.⁴ As all four-footed animals are incapable of standing on three legs, even so the religion of compassion cannot stand if any of those four divisions or parts be wanting.⁵ As the foot-prints of all other animals are engulfed in those of the elephant, even so all other religions are said to be comprehended in that of compassion. A person becomes guilty of injury through acts, words and thoughts.^{*6-7} Discarding it mentally at the outset, one should next discard it in word and thought. He who, according to this rule, abstains from eating meat is said to be cleansed in a threefold way.⁸ It is heard that utterers of Brahma ascribe to three causes (the sin of eating meat). That sin may attach to the mind, to words, and to acts.⁹ It is for this reason that men of wisdom who are endued with penances refrain from eating meat. Listen to me, O king, as I tell thee what the faults are that attach to the eating of meat.¹⁰ The meat of other animals is like the flesh of one’s son. That foolish person, stupified by folly, who eats meat is regarded as the vilest of human beings.¹¹ The union of father and mother produces an offspring. After the same manner, the cruelty that a helpless and sinful wretch commits, produces its progeny of repeated rebirths fraught with great misery.¹² As the tongue is the cause of the knowledge or sensation of taste, so, the scriptures declare, attachment proceeds from taste.^{†13} Well-dressed, cooked with salt or without salt, meat, in whatever form one may take it, gradually attracts the mind and enslaves it.¹⁴ How will those foolish men that subsist upon meat succeed in listening to the sweet music of (celestial) drums and cymbals and lyres and harps?¹⁵ They who eat meat

* By committing a slaughter, one becomes guilty of it. By inciting others to it, one becomes guilty. By mentally committing an act of slaughter, one becomes guilty of it.—T.

† *I. e.*, by eating meat, one feels the desire for meat increasing. A taste or predilection for meat is thus created. Hence, the best course is total abstinence.—T.

applaud it highly, suffering themselves to be stupified by its taste which they pronounce to be something inconceivable, undescribable, and unimaginable.¹⁶ Such praise even of meat is fraught with demerit. In former days, many righteous men, by giving the flesh of their own bodies, protected the flesh of other creatures and as a consequence of such acts of merit, have proceeded to Heaven.¹⁷ In this way, O monarch, the religion of compassion is surrounded by four considerations. I have thus declared to thee that religion which comprises all other religions within it.'"¹⁸

SECTION CXV.

"Yudhishtira said,—'Thou hast told it many times that abstention from injury is the highest religion. In Crāddhas, however, that are performed in honor of the Pitris, persons for their own good should make offerings of diverse kinds of meat.¹ Thou hast said so while discoursing formerly upon the ordinances in respect of Crāddhas. How can meat, however, be procured without slaying a living creature? Thy declarations, therefore, seem to me to be contradictory.² A doubt has, therefore, arisen in our mind respecting the duty of abstaining from meat. What are the faults that one incurs by eating meat, and what are the merits that one wins?³ What are the demerits of him who eats meat by himself killing a living creature? What are the merits of him who eats the meat of animals killed by others? What the merits or demerits of him who kills a living creature for another? Or of him who eats meat buying it of others?⁴ I desire, O sinless one, that thou shouldst discourse to me on this topic in detail. I desire to ascertain this eternal religion with certainty.⁵ How does one attain to longevity? How does one acquire strength? How does one attain to faultlessness of limbs? Indeed, how does one become endued with excellent indications?'"⁶

"Bhishma said,—'Listen to me, O scion of Kuru's race, what the merit is that attaches to abstention from meat. Listen to me as I declare to thee what the excellent ordinances, in truth, are on this head.⁷ Those high-souled persons who

desire beauty, faultlessness of limbs, long life, understanding, mental and physical strength, and memory, should abstain from acts of injury.⁸ On this topic, O scion of Kuru's race, innumerable discourses took place between the Rishis. Listen, O Yudhishtira, what their opinion was.⁹ The merit acquired by that person, O Yudhishtira, who, with the steadiness of a vow, adores the deities every month in horse-sacrifices, is equal to his who discards honey and meat.¹⁰ The seven celestial Rishis, the Vālakhillyas, and those Rishis who drink the rays of the sun, endued as all of them are with great wisdom, applaud abstention from meat.¹¹ The Self-born Manu has said that man who does not eat meat, or who does not slay living creatures, or who does not cause them to be slain, is a friend of all creatures.¹² Such a man is incapable of being oppressed by any creature. He enjoys the confidence of all living beings. He always enjoys, besides, the approbation and commendation of the righteous.¹³ The righteous-souled Nārada has said that that man who wishes to increase his own flesh by eating the flesh of other creatures, meet with calamity.¹⁴ Vrihaspati has said that that man who abstains from honey and meat acquires the merit of gifts and sacrifices and penances.¹⁵ In my estimation, these two persons are equal, viz., he who adores the deities every month in a horse-sacrifice for a space of hundred years and he who abstains from honey and meat.¹⁶ In consequence of abstention from meat one comes to be regarded as one who always adores the deities in sacrifices, or as one who always makes gifts to others, or as one who always undergoes the severest austerities.¹⁷ That man who having eaten meat gives it up afterwards, acquires merit by such an act that is so great that a study of all the Vedas or a performance, O Bhārata, of all the sacrifices, cannot bestow its like.¹⁸ It is exceedingly difficult to give up meat after one has become acquainted with its taste. Indeed, it is exceedingly difficult for such a person to observe the high vow of abstention from meat, a vow that assures every creature by dispelling all fear.¹⁹ That learned person who giveth to all living creatures the Dakshinā of complete assurance comes to be regarded, without doubt, as the giver of life-breaths in this

world.*²⁰ Even this is the high religion which men of wisdom applaud. The life-breaths of other creatures are as dear to them as those of one's to one's own self.²¹ Men endued with intelligence and cleansed souls should always behave towards other creatures after the manner of that behaviour which they like others to observe towards themselves. It is seen that even those men who are possessed of learning and who seek to achieve the highest good in the form of Emancipation, are not free from the fear of death.²² What need there be said of those innocent and healthy creatures endued with love of life, when they are sought to be slain by sinful wretches subsisting by slaughter?²³ For this reason, O monarch, know that the discarding of meat is the highest refuge of religion, of Heaven, and of happiness.²⁴ Abstention from injury is the highest religion. It is, again, the highest penance. It is also the highest truths from which all duty proceeds.²⁵ Flesh cannot be had from grass or wood or stone. Unless a living creature is slain, it cannot be had. Hence is the fault in eating flesh.²⁶ The deities, who subsist upon Swāhā, Swadhā, and nectar, are devoted to truth and sincerity. Those persons, however, who are for gratifying the sensation of taste, should be known as Rākshasas wedded to the attribute of Passion.²⁷ That man who abstains from meat, is never put in fear, O king, by any creature, wherever he may be, viz., in terrible wildernesses or inaccessible fastnesses, by day or by night, or at the two twilights, in the open squares of towns or in assemblies of men, from upraised weapons or in places where there is great fright from wild animals or snakes.²⁸⁻²⁹ All creatures seek his protection. He is an object of confidence with all creatures. He never causes any anxiety in others, and himself has never to become anxious.³⁰ If there were nobody who ate flesh there would then be nobody to kill living creatures. The man who kills living creatures kills them for the sake of the

* The sense is this : he who observes the vow of abstention from injury comes to be regarded as the giver of life-breaths in this world. The assurance given to all creatures of never injuring them on any occasion is the Dakshinā or Sacrificial present of the great sacrifice that is constituted by universal compassion or abstention from injury.—

person who eats flesh.³¹ If flesh were regarded as inedible, there would then be no slaughter of living creatures. It is for the sake of the eater that the slaughter of living creatures goes on in the world.³² Since, O thou of great splendour, the period of life is shortened of persons who slaughter living creatures or cause them to be slaughtered, it is clear that the person who wishes his own good should give up meat entirely.³³ Those fierce persons who are engaged in the slaughter of living creatures, never find protectors when they are in need. Such persons should always be molested and persecuted even as beasts of prey.³⁴ Through cupidity or stupefaction of the understanding, for the sake of strength and energy, or through association with the sinful, the disposition manifests itself in men for sinning.³⁵ That man who seeks to increase his own flesh by (eating) the flesh of others, has to live in this world in great anxiety and after death has to take birth in indifferent races and families.³⁶ High Rishis devoted to the observance of vows and self-restraint have said that abstention from meat is worthy of every praise, productive of fame and Heaven, and a great propitiation by itself.³⁷ This I heard in days of old, O son of Kunti, from Mārkaṇḍeya when that Rishi discoursed on the demerits of eating flesh.³⁸ He who eats the flesh of animals that are desirous of living but that have been killed by either himself or others, incurs the sin that attaches to the slaughter for his this act of cruelty.³⁹ He who purchases flesh slays living creatures through his wealth. He who eats flesh slays living creatures through such act of eating. He who binds or seizes and actually kills living creatures is the slaughterer. These are the three kinds of slaughter, each of these three acts being so.⁴⁰ He who does not himself eat flesh but approves of an act of slaughter becomes stained with the sin of slaughter.⁴¹ By abstaining from meat and showing compassion to all creatures one becomes incapable of being molested by any creature, and acquires a long life, perfect health, and happiness.⁴² The merit that is acquired by a person by abstaining from meat, we have heard, is superior to that of one who makes presents of gold, of kine, and of land.⁴³ One should never eat meat of animals not dedicated in sacri-

fices and that are, therefore, slain for nothing, and that has not been offered to the gods and Pitris with the aid of the ordinances. There is not the slightest doubt that a person by eating such meat goes to Hell.⁴⁴ If one eats the meat that has been sanctified in consequence of its having been procured from animals dedicated in sacrifices and that have been slain for the purpose of feeding Brāhmanas, one incurs a little fault. By behaving otherwise, one becomes stained with sin.⁴⁵ That wretch among men who slays living creatures for the sake of those who would eat them, incurs great demerit. The eater's demerit is not so great.⁴⁶ That wretch among men who, following the path of religious rites and sacrifices laid down in the Vedas, would kill a living creature from desire of eating its flesh, would certainly become a resident of Hell.⁴⁷ That man who having eaten flesh abstains from it afterwards, attains to great merit in consequence of such abstention from sin.⁴⁸ He who arranges for obtaining flesh, he who approves of those arrangements, he who slays, he who buys or sells, he who cooks, and he who eats, are all regarded as eaters of flesh.⁴⁹ I shall now cite another authority, depending upon what was declared by the ordainer himself, that is ancient, adored by the Rishis, and established in the Vedas.⁵⁰ It has been said that that religion which has acts for its indications has been ordained for house-holders, O chief of kings, and not for those men who are desirous of emancipation.⁵¹ Manu himself has said that meat which is sanctified with mantras and properly dedicated, according to the ordinances of the Vedas, in rites performed in honor of the Pitris, is pure.⁵² All other meat falls under the class of what is obtained by useless slaughter, and is, therefore, inedible, and leads to Hell and infamy. One should never eat, O chief of Bharata's race, like a Rākshasa, any meat that has been obtained by means not sanctioned by the ordinance. Indeed, one should never eat flesh obtained from useless slaughter and that has not been sanctified by the ordinance.⁵³⁻⁵⁴ That man who wishes to avoid calamity of every kind should abstain from the meat of every living creature.⁵⁵ It is heard that in the ancient Kalpa, persons, desirous of attaining to regions of merit here-

after, performed sacrifices with seeds, regarding such animals as dedicated by them.⁵⁶ Filled with doubts respecting the propriety of eating flesh, the Rishis asked Vasu the ruler of the Chedis for solving them. King Vasu, knowing that flesh is inedible, answered that it was edible, O monarch.⁵⁷ From that moment Vasu fell down from the firmament on the Earth. After this he once more repeated his opinion, with the result that he had to sink below the Earth for it.⁵⁸ Desirous of benefiting all men, the high-souled Agastya, by the aid of his penances, dedicated, once for all, all wild animals of the deer species to the deities.⁵⁹ Hence there is no longer any necessity of sanctifying those animals for offering them to the deities and the Pitris. Served with flesh according to the ordinance, the Pitris become gratified.⁶⁰ Listen to me, O king of kings, as I tell thee this, O sinless one. There is complete happiness in abstaining from meat, O monarch.⁶¹ He that undergoes severe austerities for a hundred years, and he that abstains from meat, are both equal in point of merit. Even this is my opinion.⁶² In the lighted fortnight of the month of Kārtika in especial, one should abstain from honey and meat. In this, it has been ordained, there is great merit.⁶³ He who abstains from meat for the four months of the rainy season acquires the four valued blessings of achievements, longevity, fame, and might.⁶⁴ He who abstains for the whole month of Kārtika from meat of every kind, transcends all kinds of woe and lives in complete happiness.⁶⁵ They who abstain from flesh by either months or fortnights at a stretch have the region of Brahma ordained for them in consequence of their abstention from cruelty.⁶⁶ Many kings in ancient days, O son of Prithā, who had constituted themselves the souls of all creatures and who were conversant with the truths of all things *viz.*, Soul and Not-soul, had abstained from flesh either for the whole of the month of Kārtika or for the whole of the lighted fortnight in that month.⁶⁷ They were Nābhāga and Amvarisha and the high-souled Gaya and Ayu and Anaranya and Dwilipa and Raghu and Puru,⁶⁸ and Kārtavirya and Aniruddha and Nahusha and Yayāti and Nriga, and Vishwakṣena and Cacayindu,⁶⁹ and Yuvanāçwa and Civi the

son of Uçinara, and Muchukunda and Māndhātri, and Hariçchandra.⁷⁰ Do thou always say the truth. Never say an untruth. Truth is an eternal duty. It is by truth that Hariçchandra roves through Heaven like a second Chandramas.⁷¹ These other kings also, *viz.*, Cyenachitra, O monarch, and Somaka and Vrika and Raivata and Rantideva and Vasu and Srinjaya,⁷² and Dushmanta and Karushma, and Rāma and Alarka and Nala, and Virupāçwa and Nimi and Janaka of great intelligence,⁷³ and Aila and Prithu and Virasena, and Ikshāku, and Cambhu, and Cweta, and Sagara,⁷⁴ and Aja and Dhundhu and Suvāhu, and Haryyaçwa and Kshupa and Bharata,⁷⁵ O monarch, did not eat flesh for the month of Kārtika and as the consequence thereof attained to Heaven,⁷⁶ and endued with prosperity, blaze forth with effulgence in the region of Brahman, adored by Gandharvas and Surrounded by a thousand damsels of great beauty.⁷⁷ Those high-souled men who practice this excellent Religion which is characterised by abstention from injury succeed in attaining to a residence in Heaven.⁷⁸ These righteous men who, from the time of birth, abstain from honey and meat and wine, are regarded as Munis.⁷⁹ That man who practises this religion consisting of abstention from meat or who recites it for causing others to hear it, will never have to go to Hell even if he be exceedingly wicked in conduct in other respects.⁸⁰ He, O king, who (often times) reads these ordinances about abstention from meat, that are sacred and adored by the Rishis, or hears it read,⁸¹ becomes cleansed of every sin and attains to great felicity in consequence of the fruition of every wish. Without doubt, he attains also to a position of eminence among kinsmen.⁸² When afflicted with calamity, he readily transcends it. When obstructed with impediments, he succeeds in freeing himself from them with the utmost ease. When ill with disease, he becomes cured speedily, and afflicted with sorrow he becomes liberated from it with greatest ease.⁸³ Such a man has never to take birth in the intermediate order of animals or birds. Born in the order of humanity, he attains to great beauty of person. Endued with great prosperity, O chief of Kuru's race, he acquires great fame as well.⁸⁴ I

have thus told thee, O king, all that should be said on the subject of abstention from meat, together with the ordinances respecting both the religion of Pravritti and Nivritti as framed by the Rishis.' "85

SECTION CXVI.

"Yudhishthira said,—'Alas, those cruel men, who, discarding diverse kinds of food, covet only flesh, are really like great Rākshasas!¹ Alas, they do not relish diverse kinds of cakes and diverse sorts of potherbs and various species of Khanda with juicy flavour so much as they do flesh!² My understanding, for this reason, becomes stupified in this matter. I think, when such is the case, that, there is nothing which can compare with flesh in the matter of taste.³ I desire, therefore, O puissant one, to hear what the merits are of abstention from flesh, and the demerits that attach to the eating of flesh, O chief of Bharata's race!⁴ Thou art conversant with every duty. Do thou discourse to me, in full, agreeably to the ordinances on duty, on this subject! Do tell me what, indeed, is edible and what inedible!⁵ Tell me, O grandsire, what is flesh, of what substances it is, the merits that attach to abstention from it, and what the demerits are that attach to the eating of flesh!⁶

"Bhishma said,—'It is even so, O mighty-armed one, as thou sayest! There is nothing on Earth that is superior to flesh in point of taste.'⁷ There is nothing that is more beneficial than flesh to persons that are lean, or weak, or afflicted with disease, or addicted to sexual congress, or exhausted with travel.⁸ Flesh speedily increases strength. It ordains great development. There is no food, O scorcher of foes, that is superior to flesh.⁹ But, O delighter of the Kurus, the merits are great that attach to men that abstain from it. Listen to me as I discourse to thee on it.¹⁰ That man who wishes to increase his own flesh by the flesh of another living creature is such that there is none meaner and more cruel than him.¹¹ In this world there is nothing that is dearer to a creature than his life. Hence (without taking that valuable possession).

one should show compassion to the lives of others as one does to one's own life.¹² Without doubt, O son, flesh has its origin in the vital seed. There is great demerit attaching to its eating, as, indeed, there is merit in abstaining from it.¹³ One does not, however, incur any fault by eating flesh sanctified according to the ordinances of the Vedas. The audition is heard that animals were created for sacrifice. They who eat flesh in any other way are said to follow the Rākshasa practice.¹⁴ Listen to me as I tell thee what the ordinance is that has been laid down for the Kshatriyas. They do not incur any fault by eating flesh that has been acquired by expenditure of prowess.¹⁵ All deer of the wilderness have been dedicated to the deities and the Pitris in days of old, O king, by Agastya. Hence, the hunting of deer is not censured.¹⁶ There can be no hunting without risk of one's own life. There is equality of risk between the slayer and the slain. Either the animal is killed or it kills the hunter.¹⁷ Hence, O Bhārata, even royal sages betake themselves to the practice of hunting. By such conduct they do not become stained with sin. Indeed the practice is not regarded sinful.¹⁸ There is nothing, O delighter of the Kurus, that is equal in point of merit, either here or hereafter, to the practice of compassion to all living creatures.¹⁹ The man of compassion has no fear. Those harmless men that are endued with compassion have both this world and next.²⁰ Persons conversant with duty say that that Religion is worthy of being called Religion which has abstention from cruelty for its indication. The man of cleansed soul should do only such acts as have compassion for their soul.²¹ That flesh which is dedicated in sacrifices performed in honor of the deities and the Pitris is called Havi (and, as such, is worthy of being eaten). That man who is devoted to compassion and who behaves with compassion towards others, has no fear to entertain from any creature.²² It is heard that all creatures abstain from causing any fear unto such a creature. Whether he is wounded or fallen down or prostrated or weakened or bruised,²³ in whatever state he may be, all creatures protect him. Indeed, they do so, under all circumstances, whether he is on even or uneven ground. Neither snakes nor

